

An Alternate Adventure: Sorcerer's Stone

Chapter One- A Different Beginning

“Lily! Take the twins and go! I’ll try and stop him! Go!” James yelled as he hurriedly grabbed his wand, running for the door.

Lily turned and ran a shaky hand through her young son’s unruly hair and glanced over at her daughter who was fast asleep. She looked at them intently before she sighed and called over to her husband.

“James! James, come back!!”

Silence dawned upon the dark room of their house, causing Lily’s beautiful emerald eyes to widen with shock and fill slightly with tears.

“No!! James!!” She screamed into the dark, cold night, causing both her children to flinch and begin crying loudly.

“No... Why can’t you just leave me alone, you bastard?!” Lily yelled out at the darkness, tears of anger and frustration streaming down her cheeks.

“No need to shout, Lily...” A dark figure hissed as it entered the room, throwing a disgusted grimace over at the twins on the bed.

“Children... Never really fond of them...” He spat out, raising a wand over at the crying twins.

“No, Tom! Don’t!” Lily pleaded tearfully, grabbing his arm and trying to yank the wand away but he laughed harshly and flung her aside, causing her to fall into the cold floor, sobbing.

“Tom! Please, don’t do this! They’re only children! Take me instead!” She begged, her eyes filled with tears of anguish.

The man ignored her and raised his wand over at the young infant boy.

“Avada Ked—”

“NO!!”

Lily threw herself in front of the young boy and instantly, the young boy saw a flash of green light along with a violent whooshing sound, causing his mother to slump down onto the cold floor lifelessly in front of the figure.

His sister began crying out loudly beside him, calling the evil man's attention back to the children.

"Such wretched brats! Your mother was a fool! Giving herself up for her children when she didn't really have to die! You are to die soon too anyway! You will cause me too much trouble!" The man yelled out loud, raising his wand over the boy again.

The young child cooed loudly and raised a small, fragile hand over as if to protect himself but the dark figure just laughed and pointed the wand at the young boy's forehead.

"Avada Kedavra!"

Once again, there was a flashing green light only it wasn't the young boy who slumped over lifelessly but the dark figure who suddenly screamed out in pain and anger and vanished into a cold, dark mist.

The young boy stared at the mist curiously for a minute as it seemed to float away, getting thinner and thinner and the dark figure's evil screams getting fainter and fainter.

Then, feeling the intense pain in his forehead for the first time, the young boy started crying loudly as his a lightning shaped scar burned bright green on his forehead, burning into his skin painfully.

The girl beside him heard his wails and burst out crying as well, the twins' cries echoing through the cold, dark night.

Then, the boy stopped crying just as a beam of golden light shot out of his scar and illuminated the dark sky, casting an eerie shape of a raven amongst the stars above them.

The young boy looked at the sky, as the bright raven shape in the sky seemed to darken into a frightening raven black mist, standing out against the dark blue of the night.

The young boy giggled and pointed at the sky in awe, tracing the shape with his young, chubby fingers.

The young girl beside him started crying again as the dark mist seemed to come down and envelope around the twins, surrounding them in utter darkness.

The boy watched as the dark mist hovered over his sister's forehead, circling around the crying girl until he was able to make out a crescent-shaped scar on her forehead, glowing a bright red as it burned through his sister's pale skin.

The girl cried even harder as she felt the intense pain burn into her fragile form, the mist surrounding her slowly disappearing.

The boy giggled again and reached a finger to touch his sister's newly burned scar, tracing it gently to calm her down.

"Ouchy, bye-bye..." The young boy cooed in his baby voice, giving his sister a toothy smile.

The young girl calmed down immediately, sniffing as tears ran continued to run down her cheeks, an angry pout on her face.

As soon as the boy had taken his finger away, another beam of light shot out, this time from his sister's scar and illuminated the sky, forming the shape of a raven once again, slowly becoming a bright, silver mist before disappearing as quickly as it had come, leaving the children into pitch black darkness once again.

A tall figure walked up behind him, his normally twinkling blue eyes wide and shocked as they looked up at the sky where the raven-shaped mist had been.

Slowly, his eyes traveled downward towards the destroyed debris of what had been the Potters' house where the twins lay, looking up at him curiously with big, innocent green eyes.

"Dum-Bee-Dore!" The girl squealed, reaching out her tiny hands towards him for him to pick her up.

The man bent down and obliged, reaching a finger to examine the scar on her forehead. Looking down at the boy, his eyes flashed for a minute as he saw the scar on his forehead as well.

"It cannot be..." He whispered into the night, looking up at the sky as though he demanded to know the answer.

A gigantic man soon stepped behind him, his footsteps making loud thuds in the silence. "Have yeh found em' headmaster?" He asked in a gruff voice.

The other man gently set down the young girl, turning around to face the gigantic man behind him with an apprehensive look on his face.

"Indeed, Hagrid... I believe Voldemort has not managed to fulfill his plan... He has not killed all the Potters... I believe... The fates have turned against him...The twins... They have somehow managed to escape his plans..." He said softly.

The gigantic man looked surprised, looking at the twins in awe. "How, headmaster?!"

The other man just looked up at he sky once again, sighing deeply as he watched a star twinkle in the night as though it wanted to tell him something.

"Hagrid... Voldemort has initiated something we have been awaiting for centuries... It has begun..."

The other man could not say anything and just stood speechless with his jaw agape as once again, only the impatient cries of the twins echoed through the silent night, the two men at a loss for words...

"Harry! Amanda! Get up both of you this instant!" Aunt Petunia shrieked through their covers.

Groaning, young 10-year-old Harry Potter got up, rubbing his eyes.

He felt around for his glasses and put them on, allowing him to see his twin sister still buried in the covers in the small, actually *tiny* room they slept in the Dursley's house.

"AJ! Get up!" Harry snapped as he shook her awake.

She grunted in response.

"Leave me alone, Harry." She complained bitterly, burying her head under a pillow.

Harry rolled his eyes but couldn't help smiling.

He was pretty used to his younger sister by now. Well.. Younger by only 5 minutes of course, as what their Aunt and Uncle told them.

You see, Harry James Potter and Amanda Jane Potter were twins.

Fraternal twins.

They both had raven hair, Harry's was short and sexily unruly while AJ's was shoulder-length, silky and straight.

They also had beautiful sparkling emerald-green eyes, eyes you could lose yourself in and pale, smooth skin. Harry was slightly taller; though by only a few centimeters while they were both slim in physique.

Their most amazing feature was probably their scar on their forehead. Harry's scar was shaped like a lightning bolt while AJ's was shaped as a crescent moon.

They literally looked like the opposite gender of the other which was why they were so special. The only difference about them was that Harry had to wear glasses.

AJ didn't need them.

Harry smiled to himself as he looked at her.

As much as Harry would never admit to her, he loved his younger sister very much. He didn't know how he could have possibly survived living with the Dursleys without her.

Their Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia told them that their parents died in a car crash when they were still babies, causing them to be

orphaned at such a young age and live with the Dursleys, their only remaining relatives.

Neither of them knew or remembered their parents but they were glad that even though they had no mother or father, they still had a person to call their family.

Each other.

AJ turned in her sleep for a moment and unknowingly placed her hand over his in a comforting gesture, squeezing it gently.

I guess it's true that fraternal twins can sense each other's emotions. Harry thought, surprised and touched at the same time.

He could have sworn that at times, he feels what his sister does and that he can hear her thoughts. AJ had just laughed it off though as she just gave him a slap on the back in response.

To admit the truth to himself, without AJ, he probably would have ended up killing himself years ago. She was the only family he had left and he had the instinctive obligation to always stand by her and protect her.

He knew that she would always do the same.

They were the ones who protected each other in school when their cousin Dudley and his friends would bully them.

Because of this, no one dared to come near them so they had only to hold on to each other for support.

To Harry, AJ was the only person in his life who actually loved him. She was the only reason he could still manage to smile, knowing that she was still beside him. Just thinking on how he might have survived everything alone makes him shudder.

He needed his twin...

He would always accept that.

Harry blinked to clear his head and shook her awake again.

"Come on! If Aunt Petunia calls us one more time, I'm *certain* that she will have both our butts kicked!" He declared.

She rolled her emerald eyes.

"So? Tell her to stick it up *her* behind!" She retorted, making Harry snigger slightly. He really couldn't blame his sister for hating their relatives like that.

The two of them *hated* their Aunt and Uncle. Not to mention their *whale* of a cousin, Dudley.

The Dursleys always made them feel so ugly... so useless...And... there was no other word for it... *pathetic*...

They had always regarded the twins as nothing more than *vermin*; making them do chores like mere servants while Dudley just pigged out in the kitchen, watching them work.

It was almost as if they weren't related to the Dursleys at all. It was like they were only hired helpers of theirs, just living in the house to do house work.

Besides all this, they had been forced to live in a small room, which was about the size of a closet, so that no one would see them.

Harry's young face formed itself into a hateful scowl, his hands clenching into tight fists as he thought of what else his Aunt and Uncle had done to them.

The worst thing that they could ever do to the twins was probably the way they always insulted their parents right in front of them, telling them how irresponsible, how careless or stupid they were that they got killed and left their children with them.

Sometimes, their Aunt would even complain out loud about taking the twins in 10 years ago and not bringing them to the nearest orphanage.

I would rather be in an orphanage than with them... Harry thought bitterly, rolling his eyes.

It wasn't hard to see why Harry and AJ hated them so much. The feeling was actually mutual.

Harry shook his head to clear his thoughts away and turned to look back at his sleeping twin.

"If you don't get up now AJ, I'll tickle you so hard you won't even think it's funny!" Harry threatened playfully.

AJ rolled her eyes but giggled as she got up.

"*Fine!* Happy?" She snapped with a scowl as she got up and stretched, still yawning.

Harry grinned at her.

"Very. Glad you follow your big brother." He replied smugly.

"Whatever Harry, you're only older by *five minutes* anyway. You don't have to brag about it so much. We're practically the same age!" She retorted, changing her clothes.

"Yeah, *practically*, but *technically*, I am still older than you, even if it is only by five minutes, which means you have to do whatever I say." He said haughtily, sticking his tongue out at her.

"Huh? You're not the boss of me!" AJ snapped, crossing her arms over her chest and scowling at her brother.

"You're not the boss of me!" Harry imitated her in an exaggerated high voice, rolling his eyes, laughing.

AJ just frowned at him. "Jerk-face.." She muttered under her breath.

"Hag-bitch!..." He replied casually, making her cry out in irritation.

"Jackass!"

"Brat!"

“Git!”

“Loser!”

“Freak!”

“Numskull!”

“Stupid!”

“Butthead!”

“Dork!”

“Spaz!”

“Chickenface!”

“Bitch!”

“Thank you!”

Harry rolled his eyes but was now in a laughing fit after their insult contest.

“Thank you too for that er- *interesting* exchange of fine words but we have to go now. Aunt Petunia wants us to cook breakfast.” He told her, motioning for the door.

“That old hag..” AJ mumbled but followed her brother out.

“Hey, make way!” Dudley bellowed, pushing past AJ roughly.

He elbowed her immediately as he passed by causing her to fall on Harry, wincing in pain.

“I swear, I’ll kick the little creep right in his manhood one day..” She muttered to Harry, getting up and brushing the dust from her dress.

Harry smirked but remained silent, not wanting their Aunt or Uncle to hear them talking about their son like that.

AJ wrinkled her nose in distaste as she adjusted the dress she was wearing.

Ever since she was little, she had never had any memory of ever being bought her own clothing. She had always been given Aunt Petunia's old clothes while Harry was given Dudley's old, oversized clothing.

AJ should consider herself lucky. Harry thought bitterly.

At least her clothes FIT her even though they were out of fashion. Harry's clothes were too big for him that he had to roll the sleeves of his shirt several times just to use his hands.

And bloody hell, Dudley definitely had the worst taste in shirts I had ever seen! Harry thought, looking at his large Blue's Clues t-shirt in disgust.

"About time you two! Harry, start cooking the bacon. Amanda, start making the drinks!" Uncle Vernon ordered, growling at them.

They obeyed immediately, not wanting to upset their uncle since he was definitely in one of his bad moods.

"Hurry up, you two! I don't want any funny business today!" Uncle Vernon growled again, looking over his newspaper at them with a threatening glare.

You wish... Harry thought bitterly again, his anger getting the better of him. Whenever the twins were around, their uncle would always grow a bit tense and apprehensive. He didn't really understand why... Maybe it was because funny, *weird* stuff always seemed to happen whenever the twins were around.

Like last time, Harry had caused a glass of orange juice to zoom out of Dudley's enormous, whale-like hand and float in the air for a minute before it fell on Dudley's head, knocking Dudley out and frightening the Dursleys as it did.

Or... At least... He thought he had made the glass float...

It was really unusual since he had been feeling particularly angry at his cousin at that time and he had been wishing that something like that would happen to Dudley at that very moment. He couldn't explain exactly how he had made that happen. All he knew was, he was sure it was *his* doing.

Besides, would his uncle punish him by locking him up in his cupboard if it wasn't his fault?

Add that to AJ accidentally turning their Uncle's hair an interesting shade of orange when she had given him an intense glare, making their Uncle go absolutely ballistic and punish them for a whole week.

Why do I feel like they know something that we don't? Harry wondered, wrinkling his forehead in confusion.

"Harry, quit looking like you've got less brain cells than usual and get back to work!" Aunt Petunia screeched, whacking him slightly on the head.

Harry cringed, both in pain and annoyance and cursed under his breath, rolling his eyes.

"What was that, boy?!" His uncle snapped, narrowing his eyes at him.

"Nothing, Uncle Vernon." Harry answered flatly, biting his anger back down and continuing to work, tightening his fists to hold himself back.

"He's just as diluted and stupid as his parents are." Dudley snorted, chomping on a chocolate bar as he spoke.

Harry whipped around and turned to glare at him, his emerald eyes flashing with such anger that even Uncle Vernon shifted uncomfortably.

Dudley's eyes widened slightly as the glass pitcher of water on the table burst into shards of glass, spraying across the room dangerously.

Aunt Petunia screamed, immediately running towards Dudley and covering him with her own body just as Uncle Vernon hid under the table to avoid getting hit.

AJ hadn't moved an inch but she was staring at her twin brother with her jaw hanging open, her eyes wide with shock and awe at the same time.

Harry laughed nervously and pointed to her hanging jaw.

"That's an interesting way to catch flies, you know." He kidded weakly, running a hand through his hair.

AJ couldn't respond, still frozen in shock and surprise just as the Dursleys looked at the both of them like enraged bulls, their faces seething red.

"Umm, oops?" Harry said, looking at his Uncle as the man hovered over him, his face slowly turning a dark shade of purple.

AJ elbowed her brother sharply.

Harry nudged her back, annoyed. "What?!" He hissed.

"Probably not the best thing to say at the moment..." She whispered weakly, gulping. She took a step back from their uncle and grasped Harry's arm tightly, cowering away in fear.

Harry turned to look at their Uncle, who was now trying in vain to control his temper.

He pointed a shaky finger at the twins, taking a deep breath.

He was so angry that he couldn't even make out complete sentences, beginning to mutter out single words darkly but the twins got what he meant.

"You.... Both... Look... Mess... Could have killed.... Cupboard... Cupboard... Cupboard... NOW!!" He boomed out furiously, causing both Harry and AJ to jump in surprise and fear and run out of the room with wide eyes, heading for their cupboard.

"Damn children! Could have killed us with their foolishness!" They heard Aunt Petunia shriek just as they shut the door of their cupboard, panting slightly.

"They're getting out of hand! It's time we teach those brats a lesson!" They heard Uncle Vernon hollered, banging his fist violently against the table.

AJ finally turned to face Harry, who had collapsed on their bed, burying his face in his pillow to hide from her.

"Harry, *what* did you *do*!?" She demanded, her hands on her hips.

Harry stiffened.

"How should I know?! I didn't do anything! And why should I tell you, anyway?! I'm older so I don't have to follow you anyway!" He said stubbornly, shaking his head furiously.

AJ sighed in frustration and collapsed on the bed next to him, giving her brother an apprehensive look.

"Still, why did you do that?! Did you see how mad Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia looked? Plus, that was dangerous!" She persisted.

Harry looked up at her, a frown on his features.

"I didn't do *anything*! You saw where I was, I was next to the *stove*! The pitcher was on the *table*! How could I have made it blow up?!" He pointed out shrilly.

AJ didn't look convinced, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Still, Harry... I know, you did it. I know somehow, you *made* it happen. Admit it, you *did*." She said, giving him an all-knowing look.

Harry sighed and buried his head in his hands.

"I guess I *wished* something would happen to them but I didn't expect it to actually happen. I didn't mean any harm... I'm not bad..." He said, his eyes filling slightly with juvenile tears.

AJ sighed and looked on as Harry sniffed and looked away from her, a stubborn scowl on his face.

"They were making fun of mom and dad... I don't like it when they make fun of our parents. You can't blame me for wishing they would get hurt." He said stiffly, his eyes downcast, focused on the bed.

AJ nodded, though she knew Harry couldn't see her, and enveloped her big brother in a comforting hug, resting her head on his shoulder affectionately.

"I don't blame you, Harry... I don't like it when they talk about mom and dad like that too... They're so horrible to us... I... I *hate* them..." She said angrily, scowling.

Harry nodded wordlessly, tightening his arms around his sister as his eyes darkened with hatred and... *determination*...

He sniffed again, his normally innocent emerald eyes narrowing into slits and glittering maliciously, making him look five years older than his age.

"I'll show them soon... They won't treat us like this for long... I promise AJ... There will come a time when they will actually fear us. They wouldn't dare treat us like this again... I don't know when that time is but I promise it will happen. They will regret they ever treated us like this. We'll show them our true selves...." Harry said darkly, momentarily scaring his sister.

She pulled back from their hug and stared at him, tensing when she saw the malicious gleam in his eye.

It scared her... Frankly, she had never seen that look in his eye before... It was frightening... And yet... It was also gave her a strange feeling of security inside...

She shook the thought away and gently tapped her brother on the cheek to get his attention.

"Hey, forget about them Harry. Why don't we do something else to keep us busy in here? I'm bored." She said, collapsing on the bed lazily.

The malicious gleam in Harry's eyes disappeared and was suddenly replaced by a look of laughter. Forgetting what he had been thinking about earlier, he grinned at his sister, wiping his eyes dry.

"You're not the boss of me!" He said in a high, shrill voice, which he thought sounded like AJ's voice, his hands on his hips.

AJ glared at him for a moment in irritation before she giggled and whacked him on the head lightly, mock scowling.

"Hey! Don't tease me or I'll kick your butt!" She threatened, wrinkling her nose in a frown.

Harry laughed gleefully and stuck his tongue out at his sister again, blowing her a raspberry.

AJ clenched her hands into fists and returned the favor, scowling as she tossed her hair over her shoulder.

Harry imitated her again, doing an exaggerated version of AJ flipping her hair.

"Harry!!" AJ shrieked, jumping on him and wrestling him on the bed.

Harry began laughing hysterically and tickled his sister causing her to stop and giggle uncontrollably, desperately trying to fend him off.

When he had finished, AJ was still frowning at him but she held out a hand, indicating him to do their handshake.

Harry grinned and obliged, executing the handshake they had made up when they were children perfectly, ending the handshake by bonking each other lightly on their scars with their fists.

AJ laughed and hugged him tightly.

"Thanks, jerk-face."

A/N: Hmm... Well? How was it? What do you guys think? bites nails nervously Grr, I have to know! Please review everyone! Do you guys think I should continue this story or do you think it absolutely sucked? Please tell me!! begs down on her knees Hehe... Anyway, I hope I was able to portray the whole Harry and AJ being 10 years of age thing. I had to make them act differently and more childish since they aren't even teenagers in this fic yet! Were they too mature? Gaahh... I really think this one was senseless but I guess that isn't up for me to decide. Please review! Oh and please, feel free to give out any suggestions that might help improve the story! That's all, thanks! Also, before I forget, the tenth chapter of **Alternate Adventure: Goblet of Fire** is now up! Yay!! Heehee! Sorry for the delay everyone! Luvyah all! MWAH!

Chapter 2- Suspicious Acquaintances

“Happy Birthday Dudders!” Aunt Petunia squealed, throwing her bony arms around her enormous son several weeks after as Uncle Vernon watched the scene with a proud smile on his large face.

Harry and AJ both grunted in disgust at the sight that greeted them as they walked into the neat kitchen, both of them still yawning and half-asleep.

“Hurry up, both of you! Today is a very important day and I do *not* want the two of you messing it up!!” Uncle Vernon roared, rolling a newspaper up and swatting Harry on the head with it.

Harry clenched his jaw in anger but didn’t say anything as he began setting the table up, putting the plates on the table which was already crowded with Dudley’s presents.

AJ rolled her eyes as Dudley began counting all of them, frowning as he used his fingers.

Confused and annoyed, he poked AJ in the ribs to get her attention. “What comes after 35?” He asked stupidly.

AJ covered her mouth to hide her giggle and desperately tried to keep a straight face as she said, “36.”

Dudley’s fat jaw dropped open as he glared at his mother and father, faking tears.

“36?! Last year I had 37!!” Dudley wailed to his father, scrunching his face up in an ugly scowl.

“But they’re bigger than last—”

“I don’t care how big they are!” Dudley hollered, interrupting his father.

“Well, when we go out today, we’ll buy you two more presents! How’s that Dudders? Two more presents?” Aunt Petunia said in panic, not wanting to upset her son even more.

"That would give me—" Dudley looked at AJ, obviously expecting her to do the math for him.

AJ rolled her eyes, biting her tongue to keep from laughing again. "38, *Dudders!*." She answered sarcastically in mock sweetness, pinching Dudley's fat cheeks hard in annoyance.

"Hey! Ew! Don't touch me, you'll get your cooties all over me!" Dudley snapped rudely, roughly shoving her hands away.

AJ gasped slightly as she lost her balance and almost fell backward on the floor when she felt her twin's arms circle around her waist and keep her steady, pulling her back up to a standing position.

"No one pushes my sister like that!" Harry threatened bravely, scrunching his face up in a scowl at his whale of a cousin.

He used his much smaller, child-like arms to push Dudley but unfortunately for him, Dudley was much stronger than him as he shoved him back, causing Harry to fall back slightly against his sister, wincing in pain.

Dudley guffawed stupidly, snorting occasionally which caused AJ to bite her lip to keep from laughing again despite the situation.

"Don't you ever touch us again!" Harry growled at him.

Dudley just let out a taunting smile, grasping a fistful of Harry's shirt and raising his face up to punch him again with his chubby fist.

"Make me!" He taunted.

"Make me, make you!" Harry retorted, trying to punch back.

"Make me—"

Aunt Petunia silenced them both with a sharp look, causing her son to grin innocently but put his fist down, trying in vain to look like nothing had happened.

Uncle Vernon chuckled, his eyes never leaving the newspaper. "That's my boy, Dudley! You're getting stronger every year! I'm proud of you!" He commented, winking at his son.

AJ and Harry both grimaced in disgust, dusting themselves clean and turning away from the revolting sight.

"Dear, I have bad news... I'm afraid we were not able to get any babysitters for these two, today when we take Dudley to the zoo so..." Aunt Petunia said, pointing to the twins as though they were mere pets.

"That's okay, we can stay here and watch the house—"

"Are you crazy?! And come back to see the house in ashes?! Most certainly not! You are coming with us so we can keep an extra eye on you!" Uncle Vernon boomed, interrupting AJ.

"What?! But I don't want them to come!!" Dudley wailed, faking a tantrum which caused his mother to wrap her lanky arms around her again.

Before anyone could answer, the doorbell rang, interrupting them as Aunt Petunia hurried to answer the door to let in Piers Polkiss, Dudley's rat-faced best friend.

Harry scowled and immediately linked his arm through his twin's protectively.

He didn't know why but he had always had this bad suspicion that Piers somewhat fancied his sister because of how he went out of his way to annoy her immensely.

Though the annoying rat showed it by tormenting AJ whenever he got the chance, he didn't like the idea of the rat getting to close to her. It was disgusting.

AJ grimaced and tried to move away from the rat-faced kid as far as possible just as Dudley stopped crying immediately, flashing Piers a toothy smile.

An hour later, Harry and AJ looked out miserably in the backseat of the Dursley's car as Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon droned on and on in the front seat about wreckless motorcycle drivers.

Dudley and Piers were in the backseat with the twins and since Dudley and Pier were both not exactly tiny, Harry had to balance his twin on his lap for them all to fit.

Dudley and Piers both amused themselves by childishly sniggering and giggling to themselves, hurling wadded up balls of tissue paper at Harry and AJ, which they pointedly ignored, both of them just staring out the window darkly.

Halfway through the ride, AJ fell asleep on Harry's lap as she leaned back against his chest, snuggling her head under his chin while Harry willed himself to keep away, not wanting to give Dudley and Piers the chance to pull anything on them when they were asleep.

Just as his Aunt and Uncle continued about motorcycles, Harry spoke up, a mischievous smile on his face.

"I had a dream about motorcycles. It was flying." He said casually, knowing the very idea would freak them out.

Uncle Vernon pulled the car to an abrupt stop, causing Harry to tighten his arms around his sister as they all lurched dangerously forward.

"Motorcycles do NOT fly!!" Uncle Vernon hollered, his face turning purple with rage.

Harry just smirked, his emerald green eyes flashing with flashing malice for the first time, scaring his uncle slightly.

"Are you sure, uncle?" He dared to ask, his eyes and tone of voice surprisingly daring.

His uncle looked shocked and could do nothing but blink at having been answered back.

I always knew this boy had bad blood in him...I'm up with a potential future rebel here...He thought in disgust.

Uncle Vernon ignored Harry for the rest of the ride until they got to the zoo, the car amazingly tense and quiet as they parked and headed on out to the gates.

AJ yawned sleepily and just looked around the zoo in boredom, raising an eyebrow occasionally when Dudley or Piers would exclaim excitedly about a gorilla or monkey or crocodile for that matter.

She rolled her eyes as Dudley and Piers ran excitedly into the reptile house, obviously wanting to see some large, "Scary" reptiles.

"Dudley doesn't have to go to a zoo to see a gorilla anyway. He can just look into a mirror and see the world's biggest gorilla anytime he wants!" AJ whispered to Harry, causing him to laugh out loud, cupping a hand over his mouth.

"Either that or see an ugly whale!" He added, causing AJ to giggle along with him, both of them shaking with suppressed laughter.

Aunt Petunia eyed them sharply from where she was looking at a case of a giant lizard with Dudley and Piers, silencing the twins immediately.

Slightly put out at having to remain quiet, the twins wandered off further down the room to inspect some of the other reptiles when Harry accidentally bumped into another girl, causing the girl to drop her bag full of large, thick books all over the floor.

Before Harry could attempt to pick up her books for her, the girl waved it off and retrieved her books from the floor, turning around and flashing Harry a tooth grin.

"Sorry about that." He mumbled, looking at the girl he had bumped into.

Harry couldn't help but notice that her two front teeth were slightly larger and that her hair was slightly bushy as she had it tied into a tight ponytail at the back of her head.

"Hello there. Don't worry about it, it was my fault. How are you? Are the two of you enjoying your visit here to the zoo?" The girl asked hastily, peering at them curiously.

Harry seemed to smirk in amusement at how the girl talked very fast but AJ seemed more than willing to make friends, grinning at the girl in front of her.

"It's okay I guess... Kind of boring if you ask me. Nothing really cool about seeing a bunch of animals locked up..." AJ said, shrugging.

"I know exactly what you mean. My parents only took me here because they said it might be a fun experience only I didn't really want to come since I knew I would have a lot more fun at home, finishing up on these new schoolbooks I just bought." The girl said continuously, gesturing to the thick books she had in her arms.

AJ scrunched her face up in question.

"But it's still summer vacation, isn't it? Why are you studying already?" She asked curiously.

The girl looked as though the answer was the most obvious thing in the world.

"Well *obviously*, I want to be advanced on all the lessons that I'm going to be taking up this year. I want to be at the very top of my year! By the way, just curious, where are you planning to study?" the girl asked.

"We—" AJ thought of what to say.

"We're not sure, yet. How about you?" Harry interrupted, not wanting AJ to say "Stonewall High" and humiliate them.

The girl's eyes twinkled excitedly.

"Oh I'm going to a really wonderful school this year and I'm really excited about it! My parents just got this letter the school sent them about enrolling me as a student and I must say I was really surprised when I found out. See I had originally planned to go to another school

but when I found out another school wanted me to enroll, I begged my parents to let me go there instead. It's a real honor and—”

“What school is this?” AJ asked, interrupting her excited raving.

Before the girl could answer, they all heard a male voice call loudly.

“There you are! What are you doing here? Your mother and I have been waiting for you, come on, we still have a lot to see!” The man whom the twins assumed to be the girl’s father, said, smiling at her from where he was looking curiously at a giant snake.

He beckoned his daughter over, looking at her sternly.

The girl nodded at him before turning back to smile at the twins.

“You know, I just have a question, though. I’ve noticed that you both look like twins and that you both have the popular emerald eyes I’m a bit suspicious of so can I just ask if I you both to lift up your bangs so I can see your forehead?” She asked.

Before either Harry or AJ could, however, her father called for her again, causing the girl to wince in alarm, gathering her books in her arms again and flashing the twins another smile.

“Aw, well, you know what? Forget about it, never mind. I have to get going now since my dad is getting a bit impatient. I was really nice meeting you though and I think I just had you both mixed up with another pair of popular twins. Hope you both enjoy your school year and perhaps we’ll see each other again sometime?” She said, grinning.

“Uhm... Of course... Nice meeting you too...” AJ said cautiously, a little confused at the girl’s fast talking.

“Ditto.” Harry said, looking quite bewildered.

“By the way, I never got your names...” The girl said expectantly, anticipating for an answer from the two.

Harry opened his mouth to answer but was soon interrupted this time by the girl's mother, who was standing right beside her father.

“Hermione Granger! Come here this instant!!”

The girl winced, laughing sheepishly at the twins.

“Well, as you heard, I’m Hermione. I’ll see you around some time. Gotta go.” She said, giving them one more grin before running off towards her parents.

As soon as she was gone, Harry laughed slightly to himself, shaking his head.

“What a strange girl... Almost as though she was acting like she knew something we didn’t... Seemed kind of weird to me...” He said, looking thoughtful.

AJ gave him a teasing smile as she led him to where she wanted to check out a large, sleeping snake; poking him in the ribs.

“Why? Do you like her?” She teased in a sing-song voice, grinning mischievously when Harry scowled at her and poked her back in the ribs, rolling his eyes.

“I do *not!* I couldn’t even understand a word she was saying! And besides, she’s not my type! I like blonde girls better!” Harry argued, sticking his tongue out at her.

AJ giggled, swatting his head.

“Aw, my brother is growing up! Now he’s having crushes already! Admit it! You were staring at her, Harry!” She teased again.

“More like *gaping!* And I was not staring at her!” He protested.

“Was too!”

“Was not!”

“Was too!”

“Was *not!*”

“Was too times a hundred!”

“Was *not* times a *thousand!*”

AJ laughed again, messing up Harry’s hair playfully.

“You like her!”

“Do not!”

“Do too!”

“Do *NOT!*”

AJ laughed again, punching him lightly in the stomach before running off, wanting to look at the other snake across the room.

Harry scrunched his face up, scowling but tried his best to suppress a smile at his twin’s annoying yet amusing antics.

Now she was making kissy faces at him from across the room, smirking when he stuck his tongue at her again, which she happily returned.

Shaking his head, he laughed to himself and turned to look at the snake, which was sleeping peacefully and had a large sign above it.

Harry squinted his eyes to read what was written. ***Boa Constrictor, Brazil.***

He stumbled back in pain as Dudley suddenly elbowed him out of the way, peering into the glass curiously with eager eyes.

“Make it move!” He whined to his father, who had come up next to him.

Uncle Vernon tapped the glass numerous times but the Boa slept on, ignoring the two lazily.

"It's boring..." Dudley complained flatly, turning away to look at something else.

Harry rolled his eyes, looking back at the Boa, who seemed to have seen him and suddenly straightened up, winking at him.

Harry shook his head in disbelief. *Wink?! Snakes don't wink, idiot! You're delusional...* He scolded himself but the snake seemed to be smirking at him, shaking his head at him.

Harry looked around stupidly, before he pointed to himself, foolishly asking the snake if he was the one he was talking to.

The snake nodded, seeming to bow down in respect to him briefly before nodding over the Dursleys, giving Harry a look which said, "*I get that all the time.*"

Despite the situation, Harry was surprised that he didn't find the idea of a snake talking to him ridiculous and couldn't help smirking in response, nodding in understanding at the snake.

"Must be really annoying having people fawn all over you... I don't know how you can stand it..." He whispered, not quite hearing his own words as he did.

The Boa constrictor seemed to bow down again, which Harry sheepishly returned, for whatever reason, he didn't know. Something just told him to show his respect to the snake as well... A strange driving force inside him that he couldn't really explain.

"Where are you from?" Harry asked it again, his voice a mere whisper.

The snake nodded towards the sign, causing Harry to grin in apology, nodding. "Oh right, Brazil. Was it nice there?"

The snake nodded towards the sign again, letting Harry read the part, "Bred in the zoo."

"Oh I see, you've never been to Brazil huh? Well, that's sad. Why don't you go now?" He asked.

The snake seemed to look at him gratefully and in high respect as Harry heard Piers' loud shriek from the other side of the room.

"MR. AND MRS. DURSLEY, LOOK WHAT THE SNAKE IS DOING!!"

Dudley raced over to the snake, shoving Harry aside just as AJ came up behind him, allowing her to steady him on his feet.

AJ gasped as the glass of the Boa Constrictor's glass case vanished, allowing the snake to uncoil itself and slither out of the room, causing the other people to shriek and scream in fear.

As the snake passed Harry, Harry could have sworn it seemed to look at him in recognition and honor, nodding at him in thanks.

"Thank you, *Master Harry*... You are indeed what you are to be..." It hissed, confusing Harry even more as it offered its tail to him as though expecting him to shake it.

Bewildered, Harry grasped it and gave it a firm shake as though shaking the hand of someone he had just met, before the snake moved on, exiting the room.

He couldn't explain it, but Harry couldn't help but feel a strong sense of fondness for the snake, grinning at it as it slid out of the reptile house.

"Take care of yourself!" He yelled out loud, causing the other people in the house to look at him in fear and horror.

He turned to see his sister, who was looking at him as though he was mad. "What just happened, Harry?!" She demanded, her eyes wide with disbelief and shock.

"What do you mean?" Harry asked.

"You just made friends with a *BOA CONSTRICITOR!*" She screeched, looking at him incredulously.

Harry opened a mouth to answer but he stopped whatever he had to say when he saw his Uncle's stern face, his large hand gripping both his and AJ's arm in a painfully tight hold.

"You were talking to a *snake*!! In front of all those people! Never have I been more embarrassed in my life!! You both will be in the cupboard for the whole week!" He bellowed, dragging them off towards the scar amidst Dudley's sniggers.

Sighing to himself, Harry propped himself up on one elbow as he looked around the small room, briefly seeing the small figure of his twin sleeping peacefully beside him.

Yawning, he closed his eyes, trying to forget what had happened earlier. He could explain it... The snake just seemed to draw him in... As though talking to snakes was something that seemed very natural to him... It was very strange indeed...

Plus, why is it that the snake had called him "*Master Harry*"?

How would it know my name when I've never been to a zoo my whole life?? And MASTER? What did he mean by that? Harry asked himself, rubbing his forehead.

Frowning, he looked up at the ceiling in thought. *And are snakes really that respectful to young ten-year-old boys? Or did that have something to do with him calling me "Master"?*

Harry felt his head begin to hurt from all this thinking, letting out a sigh as he flopped back down on his bed and snuggled down beside his twin, shutting his eyes sleepily.

One thought haunted him however, as he remembered the snake's exact words... "*You are indeed what you are to be...*"

And with that, an innocent question, popped into the innocent mind of Harry James Potter...

Who am I really?

Chapter 3- To Lose One's Innocence

"Some birthday this turned out to be..." Harry muttered bitterly under his breath as he stared out the window into the cold, dark night sky, watching as the sky seemed to glitter in response as though answering his question with a silent answer of its own.

Harry sighed and turned to look around the room where he saw Aunt Petunia sitting in front of the large fireplace, nervously knitting as Uncle Vernon pretended to be reading the same page of the newspaper for the past hour.

Dudley had fallen asleep on the couch, a half-eaten chocolate bar in his pudgy hand as his snores could be heard throughout the silence of the entire room.

AJ was sitting in front of the fireplace, staring at the fierce flames in silence as she seemed to hum a soft tune from her and Harry's favorite lullaby, her eyes looking downcast and devoid of emotion.

Harry smiled to himself as he recognized the lullaby she was humming. They didn't know why but ever since they could remember, they had always known that particular lullaby from heart, humming it to each other when the other couldn't sleep or when the other was feeling depressed.

Though they couldn't explain it, the lullaby always seemed to soothe them somehow... With its soft tune... They had always felt the affection and love the other one had through its beautiful melody... Like they had learned it somewhere from a dream they couldn't remember...

I could remember... Harry thought as he recalled the vision that haunted his dreams at night... It was of his mother... She was... She had always been humming that lullaby to them in that dream... Humming a lullaby to two emerald-eyed infants who watched her with absolute admiration and love...

Good god, her voice was so beautiful... Harry thought, tears slightly filling his eyes as he tried desperately to blink them away, recalling

how his mother had smiled at them, caressing their cheeks as she sang that beautiful song...

If only...I had known them... If they hadn't died in that car crash...
Harry thought sadly as he clenched his hands into bitter fists, shutting his eyes.

Sighing to himself again, he opened them, exposing two emerald-orbs to the world just as a falling star in the sky came into view, gracing the dark night sky with its beautiful ray of light.

Eyes wide and hopeful, Harry pressed a hand against the window and watched as the star fell down the dark blue sky...

*Make a birthday wish, Harry...*He thought, looking at his watch.

*Twelve fifteen...AJ and I have been eleven for about fifteen minutes...*He thought, looking at the star again.

*I... I just want to know who I am...Please...*Harry willed the star silently, scowling at his own reflection in the window as he caught sight of the lightning-shaped scar on his head.

*And how did I get this... Why is it that I feel as though there's this missing puzzle in my life that I don't know about?? What am I here for? Who am I...*Harry asked, shutting his eyes again.

All this week, that had been the question that had plagued his mind... Ever since that snake at the zoo and.... And then those darned letters... He really didn't have any damned idea where his life would be taking a direction at all...

It had been a typical day of doing his usual chores for the Dursleys just one week ago when someone had decided to write a letter addressed to him and his sister, shocking his uncle when he had seen the address:

To Mr. and Ms. Potter

The cupboard under the stairs

#4 Privet Drive

Little Whining

Surrey

Neither of the twins even had a chance of holding the letter for more than five seconds before their Uncle would snatch it out of their hands and rush it to the fireplace, desperately wanting nothing than to have it burned.

It hadn't stopped there, however, for whoever this sender was must have known that the letter didn't get to his supposed recipient because the letters just kept on coming, each time multiplying more by number when Uncle Vernon had burned them all.

However, the sender must have been getting rather desperate for the last straw for their uncle had been when a whole horde of those thick letters came flying inside the house through the fireplace, making Dudley scream like a sissy and hide behind his mother's arms.

Their Uncle went ballistic after that, immediately packing them all up inside the car and heading off to all the secluded places he knew in an attempt to get away from, as he had claimed, "homicidal, maniac sender" but somehow, wherever they were, the letters would somehow get to them, with the correct address of their new residence written clearly on it.

Uncle Vernon had one more chance however, as he drove them off far amidst any civilization, even using a boat to whisk them off to this miserable little shack surrounded by the ocean .

Yup...No doubt, it would take magic to get those letters here now. Harry thought bitterly, his dark emerald eyes flashing at the sky just as the thunder seemed to boom loudly, jerking his twin sister, who was still staring at the fire, back into reality.

She turned wide, frightened eyes to her brother before shakily getting up and rushing over to him, burying herself in his arms in fear.

Harry tightened his arms around her trembling form, stroking her back gently as he tried to calm her down. He didn't know why but AJ had always been afraid of loud thunderstorms ever since they were children.

She had told him the loud banging reminded him of the time Dudley had locked her in a broom closet and had repeatedly banged loudly on the door, traumatizing her completely.

She could hear anything else except for those taunting voices at her and the loud banging... Whenever she would hear it, it reminded her of those painful memories... It still did...

Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia just looked at them in disgust for a minute before turning away, not wanting to waste any more time on the children just as Dudley gave them a taunting grin, smudges of chocolate around his piggish mouth.

AJ shivered, shutting her eyes in an attempt to shut out the loud noises but Harry just tucked her hair behind her ear, bending down to whisper something to her.

"You are such a scaredy-cat..." He teased playfully, hoping to get her mind away from the painful memory.

"No I'm not! I'm just cold!" She protested, scowling at him.

"Yeah right... AJ's afraid of the big bad storm! Ooh!! What a sissy!" Harry taunted again, grinning as AJ swatted his arm painfully, her face scrunched up in mild indignation.

"I. Am. Not! You're just an ugly monster!"

"You are too and I am not!"

"I am not and you are too!"

"You are so too and I am so not!"

"Huh?"

Harry laughed before kissing her on the forehead before looking out the window in silence, earning him a bewildered look from his twin.

AJ sighed as she looked over at the watch in her brother's wrist, silently reading the time.

Twelve 30... Great... I was eleven already and I didn't even know about it. And what a way to spend a birthday... She thought as she yawned, looking at the window beside her brother.

Well... Make a wish, AJ...She thought dejectedly as she watched the stars twinkling up at them. I... I just wish life would get better after this...There has to be a better life out there for us...She thought.

BOOM!!

Harry and AJ both shot upright at the sound of heavy banging on the door of the shack just as the Dursleys screamed in fear, Uncle Vernon immediately rushing to his rifle in panic.

Dudley scrambled to his mother, hiding his enormous bulk behind her puny form just as Aunt Petunia hid herself behind Uncle Vernon, all three of them slowly backing away from the door.

Harry and AJ exchanged wide-eyed looks before Harry jumped to his feet, the only one brave enough to take a step towards the door.

BOOM!!

“Don’t you come any further!!” Uncle Vernon bellowed at the unknown visitor, his rifle shaking in his hands as he backed even further away.

BOOM!!

“I-I’m warning you!! I’m armed, whoever you are!” Uncle Vernon howled again, now pointing his rifle at the door.

“Mummy!! Don’t let them get me!” Dudley squeaked, his voice suddenly taking a more girlish note in fear.

SMASH!!

"Harry!!" AJ screamed, pulling her brother away to safety just as the door collapsed back and landed on the floor with a deafening crash just where Harry had been before.

Harry and AJ both landed on the floor with a loud thud in front of the visitor, very slowly looking up with wide, nervous eyes at the gigantic man in front of them.

Slowly, they let their still wide, innocently-frightened eyes trail up from the man's huge boot up to his face, which was almost completely hidden by long, shaggy hair and a tangled beard. His eyes glinted like black beetles under his hair.

The man seemed to smile at the sight of the small gaping twins sprawled on the floor in front of him, looking much smaller than they really were compared to his height before he took a heavy, gigantic step towards them, letting the light show his face.

"Harry, Amanda... So good ter see yeh both again!! Why, yeh both look so much older than the last time I saw yeh!" He boomed, opening up his large arms to them.

Harry and AJ just stared at him from where they were still sprawled on the cabin floor, jaw still hanging open and eyes wide with disbelief and horror.

The man seemed to look hurt as he took more steps towards the gaping twins, making the Dursleys gasp in fear again and back further away, trying to get away from the giant man as far as possible.

"Why, what's wrong with yeh? I'd almost think yeh weren't happy ter see me!" The man said, looking slightly disappointed at their reaction.

The twins seemed to move their jaws soundlessly before they gave their first reaction ever since the man entered the room, though it wasn't exactly what the man had in mind.

"Aaaaagh!!" Harry and AJ screamed simultaneously, frantically scrambling up and trying to bolt out the open door in terror but the man caught both of them by the collar with his hands, Harry on his

left hand and AJ on his right and lifted the children up easily from the floor to inspect their faces more closely.

“Aagh!! Please don’t hurt me! I’ll do anything!!” Harry yelled again, his eyes widening more, if possible, when he noticed that his feet were no longer on the ground.

“Agh!! Monster!! Help!!” AJ screamed, frantically trying to struggle with her captor but the man just laughed, setting them both down gently on the ground before patting both their heads lightly in a fatherly gesture.

“Aw, shucks! You two are quite the comedians aren’t yeh?” The man said, still chortling as he easily lifted the fallen door up again and placed it back in its frame.

Harry and AJ watched him curiously now, no longer afraid as they peered up at him in question, their foreheads wrinkled in confusion.

“Who... Who are you?” AJ asked, still squinting up at the gigantic form in front of her.

The man was supposed to answer when Uncle Vernon stepped forward again, pointing his rifle at the man in a brave attempt to look intimidating.

“I demand that you leave at once! You are breaking and entering!” He stuttered pathetically, his rifle shaking.

The man just turned annoyed eyes to him, not at all threatened by the rifle in the other man’s hand.

“Shut up, Dursley, you old prune!” The man growled, grabbing the end of the rifle and bending it back easily.

Uncle Vernon made a startlingly funny sound at the back of his throat before backing away again, trying to get as far away from the giant as possible.

“Anyway, Harry, Amanda, I got summat fer yeh. I think I mighta sat on it at some point but I’m hopin it’ll taste just the same.” The man said,

settling himself on the couch and patting the spots next to him to indicate the twins to sit down.

Dudley made a squeaky sound and hid behind his mother again just as Harry and AJ cautiously plopped themselves down, their eyes still narrowed and suspicious.

"Well, whatcha both lookin so suspicious for? I ain't dangerous, now!" The man kidded, pulling out a crinkled box out of his robes and handing it to them.

Harry watched as his sister shakily opened the box to reveal a small cake with the words, "Happy Birthday Harry and Amanda!" written on it in green icing.

Harry looked up at the man and opened his mouth to say thank you but the words that came out of his mouth was similar to the question his sister had asked earlier instead.

"Who are you?"

The man laughed, nodding at him. "I guess I *should* introduce myself. Well, I'm Rubeus Hagrid, keeper of keys and grounds at Hogwarts but just call me Hagrid, never did like the name Rubeus, much." He said, winking at them.

Harry and AJ both grinned but couldn't prevent the curiosity the still sparkled in their eyes as Hagrid pointed his umbrella at the fireplace and instantly, sparks flew out of it, instantly igniting a strong blazing fire.

Aunt Petunia gasped in fear. "You will not do that filthy rubbish in front of my family!" Uncle Vernon yelled angrily. His face turned bright purple as Harry and AJ both sniggered at him in amusement, causing him to widen his eyes in anger and surprise.

The twins both watched as the man began to take out a variety of things from his pocket, setting them down on the table. AJ started scooting closer in interest as the man started to make tea and cook sausages at the same time, filling the room with the enticing smell of burnt sausage.

Dudley started shifting uncomfortably, causing Harry to smirk at him before Uncle Vernon gave his son a glare.

“Don’t touch anything he gives you, Dudley.”

Hagrid snorted, looking at Dudley in amusement. “Don’t worry, Dursley. Your son doesn’t need to be fattened up anymore, anyway.” He said, shaking his head.

Harry smirked wider, grinning at the giant as AJ hid her giggles behind her hand, not wanting their Uncle or Aunt to hear her.

Hagrid offered some sausages to the twins, who took it immediately, saving the questions they had for later as they ate it silently, much to the dismay of the Dursleys, who were still cowering away in fear.

“Uhm, excuse me, Mr. Hagrid??” AJ asked timidly, looking uncertain about what to call the giant.

Hagrid seemed to smile, shaking his head at her.

“It’s just Hagrid, Amanda, and did yeh want ter ask somethin?” He replied, looking at her.

AJ looked a little annoyed as she let out a breath of frustration. “Please, uhm, *Hagrid*, just call me AJ. Just AJ. Anyway, you said something about Hogwarts...” Her voice trailed off.

Hagrid chuckled again, nodding at her. “Alright, AJ. And of course, yeh know all about Hogwarts, don’t yeh?”

AJ turned to look at her brother, who bit his lip and shook his head. “Uhm... Sorry...No...” He said uncertainly.

“Sorry?! Blimey, I knew yeh weren’t gettin yer letters but yeh don’t know a bloody thing about Hogwarts?? Fer cryin out loud, didn’t yeh ever wonder where yer parents learned it all?!” Hagrid raged, more at the Dursleys than at the twins.

“All what?” AJ and Harry both asked at the same time, looking at each other in slight surprise.

Hagrid looked absolutely enraged now as he leapt to his feet and stomped over to the Dursleys, who were covering against the wall.

“ALL WHAT?! Yeh never told them anythin’!” Hagrid fumed at the family in rage.

“About what?” Harry asked in frustration.

“About *our* world. *Yer parents’ world.*” Hagrid explained carefully, looking at them with wide eyes.

“What world?” AJ pressed on.

“DURSLEY!”

Uncle Vernon looked deathly pale now as though he wanted the floor to open up and swallow him whole.

“Harry, AJ, yer mum and yer dad, they’re famous! Yer both famous! Yer—” Hagrid never got to finish his sentence as Harry spoke up again.

“They were?” He asked.

“Yeh don’t know... Yeh don’t know... Yeh don’t know who yeh are?!” Hagrid asked the twins with a bewildered look on his face.

Harry’s eyes widened as he shot upright, looking at the giant man pleadingly.

“I.... I never knew who I am but I’ve always felt as though this wasn’t the life that I... We...were supposed to have... Please sir, tell me, who am I? I’ve been wanting to know for such a long time now!” He pleaded.

Hagrid opened his mouth to speak but Uncle Vernon suddenly found his voice again, looking at Hagrid in the most threatening way he could.

"Stop right there, I *forbid* you to tell them this gibberish!" He commanded but his efforts were in vain as Hagrid just glared at him in disgust and loathing.

"I can't believe yeh never told them what was in the letter Dumbledore himself wrote fer them! Yeh've kept it from these poor children all these years and now, they don't even know who they are!"

"Who are we?!" AJ asked impatiently, her eyes eager and excited now.

Aunt Petunia gasped in horror.

"Ah go boil yer heads, both of yeh, Harry, AJ, yer a wizard and witch just like yer mother and yer father!" Hagrid said, looking at them proudly.

No one spoke in the cabin for a whole minute before Harry spoke up in disbelief, his voice nearly high as a squeak.

"We're *what*?!" Harry asked, his eyes nearly popping out of their sockets.

"A witch and a wizard, of course! And I'm betting yeh'll both be the best there is once yeh've been trained up a bit! After all, yer parents were very powerful themselves! I reckon it's about time yeh've read yer letter, ay?" Hagrid said, pulling out a large, yellow envelope from his pocket with emerald green writing in it.

AJ snatched the letter from Harry's hands and the twins both began fighting over it as they frantically hurried to get it opened.

Harry's eyes widened again as he began reading over the contents of the letter, AJ reading over his shoulder.

HOGWARTSSCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY

Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore

(Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorc., Chf. Warlock, Supreme Mugwump, International Confed. of Wizards)

Dear Mr. and Ms. Potter,

We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Enclosed is a list of all necessary books and equipment.

Term begins on September 1. We await your owls no later than July 31.

Yours sincerely,

Minerva McGonagall,

Deputy Headmistress

Harry's jaw was hanging open again just as AJ made a wheezing gasp behind her throat and immediately fainted back against the couch with a loud thump in absolute shock.

"They are *not* going!" Uncle Vernon raged, looking as though he was a bull that was trapped in a room with no other color besides blood red.

"I'd like to see a great muggle like yeh stop em!" Hagrid retorted.

"What's a muggle?" Harry asked, helping his sister back up, who had just come around.

"Why, non-magic folk o course! And from what I can see, yeh both grew up in a family of the biggest muggles I've ever seen!" Hagrid said, looking at the Dursleys in disgust again.

"Did you actually know we were...*magical?*" AJ asked, almost scared to pronounce the word herself.

"Knew?! Of course we knew! My sister being who she was, a dratted *freak!* She went to that school and next thing I knew was that she was turning teacups into rats, carrying a pocket full of frog spawn! I was the only one who saw her for the freak she really was but my parents were actually *proud* of having a witch in the family!" Aunt Petunia suddenly shrieked, reminding Harry that she was still in the room.

"Then she met that Potter at school, they left, got married, had the two of you and I knew you two would be just the same! Then they got themselves blown up and we got landed with both of you!" She continued hysterically.

Harry's eyes surprisingly suddenly flashed in anger, causing the windows behind the Dursleys to shatter instantly, showering them with tiny shards of sharp glass.

Dudley and Aunt Petunia both screamed, ducking just as Uncle Vernon turned wide, surprised eyes at the Harry, who was seething with such anger they had never seen before. *Who knew he could actually fight back...He thought.*

"Don't you dare insult our mother and father in front of us!" Harry spat at them, his eyes for the first time blazing very coldly and very maliciously as a hateful snarl formed themselves on the young boy's lips.

A cold, cruel and evil smirk began to form itself on his face as he made to stand up but AJ laid a gentle hand on his arm, pulling him back on the couch to prevent him from doing anything drastic.

She hadn't seen this side of her brother before and frankly, it scared her. He almost seemed cold somehow... She couldn't explain it but there had always been these moments wherein her twin brother let out a side of him that she had never expected to see in him... A sudden mean streak or somewhat....

And she knew Harry well enough to know that that side of him couldn't be kept inside forever... Pretty soon, it would explode out and she was only hoping that when it did, he could learn to control it... That ruthless side has been buried for years now but AJ knew that it was something Harry wanted to bring out.

It was the real Harry in him that was hiding but the only thing she was afraid of was that if she did finally see the real Harry in him, would she still be able to call him a brother?

Sighing, AJ patted her brother's arm comfortingly in an effort to calm his anger down. She certainly did *not* want that side of Harry to be released in a moment like this one.

Hagrid watched the exchange with slight surprise in his eyes, looking at the unmistakable anger in young Harry's emerald-green eyes. He couldn't explain it but he had a feeling Harry was still hiding something inside him...

"Anyway, *Aunt Petunia*," AJ continued, saying her Aunt's name in disgust, "You said something about our mum and dad being blown up... how is that possible when you told us they died in a car crash?" She asked again as Harry slightly relaxed, taking deep breaths.

"CAR CRASH?! Lily and James were the best and most promising students Hogwarts had to offer in their time! They could not have died in a car crash!! This is an outrage! The Potter twins not knowin who they are when every kid in our world know yer names!" Hagrid bellowed, shooting another angry glare at the Dursleys.

"But... What happened then?!" Harry asked urgently.

Hagrid suddenly looked extremely uncomfortable, looking at Harry and AJ in unmistakable pity.

"Well.. I'm not so sure if I'm the right person ter tell yeh all... But heck, someone's got ter tell yeh either way before yeh go to Hogwarts!" Hagrid said, sighing as he looked at the twins with a serious look.

"Tell us what?" AJ asked, her eyes wide in curiosity and dread at the same time.

"Well... Mind you, I can't tell yeh all since most of it is still a great mystery but I spose it'll be best if I tell yeh what I know..." Hagrid said thoughtfully, staring at the fire.

Harry and AJ both nodded, staring at the man in front of them intently as he started to speak in a hushed whisper.

"Well... I suppose I better start from the very beginning... Yeh see, there was this one person... Well, I really don't like ter say his name but—"

"Who?" Harry pressed impatiently.

"Well... How can I say this... No one likes ter say his name much..." Hagrid said, his voice trailing off.

"Why not?" AJ asked curiously.

"Gulpin' gargoyles, AJ.. People are still scared..." Hagrid said, gulping before he took a deep breath, looking at them.

"Well, this one wizard went... bad... As bad as you could go... Worse. Worse than Worse. *Evil*...And his name was... His name was..." Hagrid trailed off again, his eyes looking nervous.

"Yes?" Harry prodded.

"Alright... *Voldemort*..." Hagrid gave a shudder before shaking his head, looking sharply at them. "I won't say his name again.. Anyway, this wizard gathered up some of his followers, mostly those who joined him out of fear, and began ter take over... Oh those were the dark days, they were... Anyway, those who stood up to him were killed... Only safe place before was Hogwarts since Dumbledore seems ter be the only one you-know-who was scared of.." Hagrid explained slowly.

"Yer mum and dad were the best witch and wizards back in their time, I'd say! Head girl and boy they were too! Kinda strange why Voldemort never tried ter get them over for his side but it was probably because they were too close with Dumbledore and they didn't want anythin ter do with the dark side... I don't know myself the reason why he turned up Halloween night on yer doorstep... Some say it was because he was tryin ter persuade yer mum and dad to join his side." Hagrid said, stroking his bearded chin in thought.

"You were both just one year old when he came and..." Hagrid stopped talking when he pulled out a handkerchief, blowing his nose.

"Sorry... I was gettin all choked up there... See I knew yer mum and dad and well... Somethin people never knew about yer family was that yer mum was actually... Ah, never mind...Anyway, you-know-who... He... *killed* them. And here's the mystery because after they died, he tried ter kill you too but when he did, he disappeared, leaving you both with that scar on your forehead... Now I don't know how it happened... Harry was left with a lightning shaped scar on his forehead after the spell he had tried ter perform on yeh but another mystery was that..." Hagrid looked intently at AJ's scar beneath the girl's bangs.

"No one knows how yeh got yers, AJ... Well, maybe except Dumbledore but he never told anyone how it happened... All he told me was that *it was all a part of the written prophecy...* Whatever that meant, he was bein serious about it so I decided to leave it alone. So that's why yer both famous... No one has ever lived after you-know-who tired ter kill them... Yer the only ones who did... *The twins-who-lived...*" Hagrid said with a note of finality in his voice, looking at the twin's sadly.

AJ's eyes began to water with tears as she clenched her hands into tight fists, trying in vain to stop them from spilling over.

Harry was silent during the entire story as he kept his eyes trained on the table, cold and distraught. He could somehow remember it clearly now... Well... Just the part when he heard his mother screaming...

It had always haunted his dreams at night... Making him wonder more and more on who he truly was... He could see his mother falling lifelessly on the floor amidst the cruel, harsh laughter of the dark figure before him..

The flash of green light that came before his eyes... The blinding pain on his forehead, the mist and the beam of light that had shot out into the sky... It was all coming back now and as he remembered it more and more, his eyes seemed to grow darker by the minute.

AJ leaned back and watched her brother in absolute fear as his eyes seemed to darken with an almost glistening evil, the normally warm, emerald orbs hardening and releasing the hatred he had pent up inside all these years.

That... Man... Voldemort... He killed my parents...He did this to us, He...He... Harry thought, his form shaking in anger as he clenched his fist tighter and tighter until AJ saw blood oozing out from his hand.

"Harry, try ter relax... Breathe, Harry...Breathe..." Hagrid said, trying to snap Harry's attention back but Harry was livid as his eyes intensified in wild rage, seeing nothing else but red all around him.

"Harry, please, try to calm down!" AJ pleaded in fear as Harry's eyes seemed to cloud over into something she had never thought she would see in him before...*hatred... undeniable, seething and malicious hatred...*

*He's...He's changing... He's letting that side out...*AJ realized in panic as she watched him.

"He's scaring me, mummy!" Dudley whined fearfully, cowering behind Aunt Petunia.

"Must... Kill him... I 'll make him pay for what he did...I don't know who he is yet and I don't know know but I'll make him pay..." Harry muttered darkly under his breath, his once innocent eyes now glinting malevolently.

Hagrid looked at him in alarm as he stared at the boy in front of him. The innocent, clueless emerald-green eyes were now gone... Or at least... Masked... Now he couldn't see anything else but hatred and anger...

*Blimey... He's inherited Lily's anger... I saw the same change in Lily's own emerald eyes when she was a child...*Hagrid thought in realization.

Lily had always been a sweet, innocent girl in her age but something had happened that had altered her personality completely, releasing the inner person she had kept inside.

*And I'm just about to see the real Harry Potter now...*Hagrid thought as Harry, who was still seething with frightening anger, opened his mouth to say something.

AJ widened her eyes as her brother, snapped his head up and glared at the Dursleys in such a way that even Uncle Vernon had gulped and shakily backed away in fear.

"I'm scaring you?! I'm scaring you?! Well let me tell you something, cousin, what scares me, is that all these years we've been living with this belief that our parents had died in a car crash and you never once thought to tell us about our real lives and identity and that our parents were murdered?! We've been living a lie for eleven years!"

Harry yelled angrily at them, his eyes burning chillingly.

"Harry—"

AJ never got to finish her sentence as Harry let out a horrifying scream of anger that pierced through the silent night, making the entire cabin shake and rumble and all the remaining windows and glass furniture in the room to shatter instantly.

Hagrid's eyes widened as he saw the high uncontrolled magical energy that Harry had released into the small room. The Dursleys screamed in absolute terror as Harry stopped abruptly, breathing heavily as AJ shakily put her arms around him in an attempt to calm him down.

Harry buried his head in her arms, panting heavily.

A terrified silence filled the room as only Harry's heavy breathing could be heard in the night before he finally looked up from AJ's embrace, frightening the Dursleys again when for the first time, they saw the cold, sinister yet surprisingly calm smirk on his face.

"I'm fine.... I'm cool." Harry drawled, the sneer on his face growing as he noticed Dudley now cowering away from him.

His emotionless eyes glinted with malice for a minute before he turned the now cold emerald orbs to Hagrid, who was too shocked to say anything.

"Yes, well, don't stop now, Hagrid. Things were starting to get interesting... Would you by any chance be willing to teach me the

curse Voldemort used by the way?" Harry asked almost sarcastically, an eyebrow raised archly.

Hagrid winced at the sound of the evil wizard's name but shook his head instantly, giving Harry a stern look.

"Now, Harry, that curse is a forbidden one and I will not be teaching yeh such a thing! Yer too young for it, anyway. Anyway, that's why yeh both have ter believe me when I say yer goin to Hogwarts ter learn and be just as darn good as Lily and James were!" Hagrid beamed, trying to loosen the tension.

AJ wasn't listening however, as she stared at her brother with a worried look on her features.

"Harry? Are you okay?" She asked, almost timidly.

Harry turned to look at her, the new smirk still in place but it had softened slightly into a sideward grin when his gaze had directed itself at her.

AJ examined his eyes.

Though the change in them was indeed, very noticeably, there was one thing she could still make out amidst the new hatred and ice there... AJ could see the love and affection he still had for her inside... *Her* brother was still in there...

AJ sighed in relief and hugged him close, closing her eyes silent gratitude.

Pulling back, AJ could help but turn wide eyes to Hagrid. "But... Are you sure about this? That we're magical because frankly—"

"Of course I'm sure! Yeh just saw how powerful yer brother could be there now, didn't yeh? And I'm certain yeh have the same power because yer mother and father were the best there is!" Hagrid told her.

"They are *not* going! They're going to Stonewall high and they'll be grateful for it!" Uncle Vernon spat out.

"If they want ter go, yeh can't stop em! Tryin ter stop Lily and James' children from goin to Hogwarts, yer mad. They'll be the best witch and wizard in Hogwarts, trained under the best headmaster Hogwarts has ever had, Albus Dumbledore." Hagrid said proudly.

"I will not pay some crackpot old fool to teach them magic tricks!!" Uncle Vernon yelled.

"Never insult Albus Dumbledore in front of me!" Hagrid thundered, grabbing his umbrella and pointing it at Dudley.

Almost immediately, there was a flash of violet light before Dudley began dancing on the spot with his hands over his fat backside where a curly pig's tail was poking out from a hole in his trousers.

AJ dissolved into a fit of hysterical giggles on the spot while Harry sneered, jumping up from the sofa and walking over to Dudley, who backed away in fear instantly, his eyes wide with alarm.

"S-Stay back!! Stay back you freak or I'll—" Dudley never got to finish his sentence as Harry raised his fist and punched him right in the kisser. (A/N: Heehee! That was for you Pam Briggs!)

AJ, if possible, began to giggle even harder as Dudley recoiled back in pain, stumbling back against the wall, not knowing whether to howl in pain from Harry's punch or to scream in panic because of the tail on his behind.

"Ow!! Mummy!! He punched me! I'm bleeding!" Dudley wailed as he rolled around the floor on Harry's feet in pain, the tail still visible on his rear.

Harry smirked sadistically and kicked Dudley ruthlessly on the stomach, making the larger boy wheeze in pain and cringe away from him.

"You will not punch my son like that, you freak!! After all we have done for you and for ungrateful sister!" Uncle Vernon howled as Aunt Petunia, who was sobbing hysterically at her son's new tail and bleeding lip, pulled Dudley to safety in the next room.

Harry didn't run away in fear as he did before when he actually grabbed Hagrid's umbrella and pointed it at the man in front of him, his eyes cold and unaltered.

"If you ever lay a hand on me or AJ again, so help me, I will use this newfound *magic* to kill you and your family." Harry threatened darkly, his eyes narrowing themselves into tiny slits.

Uncle Vernon's jaw dropped open in shock before he tensed and growled under his breath, whirling around and storming into the next room with his family, slamming the door behind him.

The slam echoed through the night before AJ squealed and jumped up, throwing her arms around her brother in a hug.

"That was bloody awesome, Harry! You rule! You kicked butt! You're the man!" AJ said, giggling as she kissed his cheek playfully.

"Yuck." Was all Harry said as he pretended to wipe his cheek clean, smirking playfully at his sister.

Hagrid watched them in amusement, stroking his bushy beard as he looked slightly worried.

"I'm hopin yeh won't tell anyone about that... I shouldn't have lost me temper like that... I'm not spose ter do magic since I got expelled in my third year... Snapped my wand in half, they did... Anyway, what do yeh say we tuck in for the night? That way, we can get up early tomorrow ter get yer school things." Hagrid said cheerfully.

Harry and AJ both nodded as Hagrid threw them a coat, yawning.

"You can use that fer tonight. Don't mind it if it wriggles, I got a couple of dormice in the pockets..." He said gruffly, making AJ jump away from it immediately.

Harry raised an eyebrow before shrugging and wrapping the coat around himself.

"Oh and Harry?" Hagrid asked him, looking at him intently.

Harry looked at him expectantly.

"I'd say yeh had better learn to control that temper of yers, okay?"
Hagrid said.

Harry smirked under the coat, not wanting to let Hagrid see him.

"I'll try..."

A/N: Hmm... How was that for a chapter? I swear, my head is so mixed up right now that I can't write properly! Anyway, I hope I hadn't kept you all waiting too long for this chapter but I was too busy with my Goblet of Fire fic... Hmm.. Anyway, **please REVIEW!!** It might help sort my mind out or something! By the way, don't worry guys, I'll be updating the Goblet of Fire fic soon! Just as soon as I gather my thoughts back up on it! I have a lot of ideas pouring in for it at the moment! Hehehe... Hope you all liked the change in Harry there... Next chapter, we'll finally get to see Harry and AJ's first encounter with Draco at the robe shop... I wonder where it will go... Wink Hehe, well, see you all! *MWAH!* Ciao!

Chapter 4- Delving into the Unknown

“Hagrid? Where exactly are we going?” AJ asked Hagrid as she, Harry and the giant-sized man rode on the train, people staring at Hagrid in confusion and shock while Harry just glared back at all of them dangerously, making them shift uneasily and turn away.

“Harry! Quit frightening the people!” AJ hissed, nudging her brother sharply in the ribs as he gave a sneer at a nearby, nosy lady, who gave a sharp gasp of fear and moved away to the other end of the train.

Harry just turned and gave his sister a reckless grin, which caused AJ to giggle at his behavior despite the still frightened glances the three were receiving.

“Now, Harry! Yeh’ve got ter act normal around muggles like these! Yeh don’t want any of them ter get suspicious now, would yeh?” Hagrid said casually, giving the two children an amused smile.

“They’re annoying! Peering like us like we’re some kind of weirdoes! They make me feel like I’m a glass specimen or something!” Harry retorted, flashing another frightening sneer at a young, staring kid who was getting off with his mommy.

The kid gave a squeak and jumped off the train immediately while his mother got off after him, muttering something about “Frightening young boys who have nothing better to do than to scare little children...The things children learn nowadays!”

AJ and Harry both broke out into identical smirks, shaking their heads as Hagrid made a faint tutting sound, looking disapprovingly at them.

“Well yeh better get used ter it, Harry! I’m quite sure that yeh’ll have much more people gawking at yer scars once yeh get into the wizarding world! Yer heroes, both of yeh!” Hagrid reminded them proudly.

Harry and AJ just gave him a weak smile, not saying anything.

"If I had known yeh both had received James' mischievous side and Lily's attitude, I would have brought yeh both somewhere yeh couldn't do any harm." He told them, making the two laugh again.

"So, anyway, as I said, where are we going, Hagrid?" AJ asked, turning back to the large man as Harry went back to giving the muggles his frightening glares.

Right after the three had left the Dursleys, who were still in the shack trying to do something about Dudley's tail, they had taken the boat back to shore, Hagrid *secretly* using magic to speed it up.

Harry and AJ had stared in awe and excitement as they had watched Hagrid point the umbrella at the boat and speed them right back up to the shore.

All the way to the train, Hagrid had already began teaching them all about what he would say, "*Our World*"...He had already explained to them a couple of things about the Wizarding world... About the Ministry of Magic, different kinds of Wizard money they used and where they would first stop at London to get their school things.

Hagrid had also told them about Gringotts Bank, their first stop of the day, where apparently the twins' parents had left them a mountain of wizarding money just waiting to be used.

As Hagrid had told the extremely shocked twins, their father, James Potter, was evidently the only heir of the respectable and well-known Potter family, one of the richest and most prominent pure-blooded families in the wizarding world.

It seems, according to history, as Hagrid explained, the Potters were a very powerful and influential family at that time... They had been told that there had already been a very fine line of Heroes and famous wizards or witches in the Potter clan...They had always been in this continuous battle against Voldemort when they were alive which was probably one of the reasons Voldemort had tried to end it completely....

When James' father had died, he had left his entire fortune to his only son, James and this fortune, so it seems, was locked up in a vault at Gringotts bank, where they were headed to right now.

Harry had been pissed, to say the least, since he had just found out that he didn't know they had tons of money waiting for them in a bank in London for 11 years but he had been ecstatic all the same and he and AJ had both sworn never to tell the Dursleys about it.

Along the way there, Hagrid had also told them all about Gringotts and the kinds of creatures that ran the bank... Or at least, he had explained it to AJ, who was the one who seemed interested enough to listen as Harry just played along with Hagrid's umbrella, trying to get it to work a few spells.

AJ was snapped out of her thoughts as Hagrid answered her question, his hoarse, deep voice breaking through her deep thinking.

"Why, we're off ter London of course! We have ter buy your school things before yeh both start goin off ter Hogwarts! Now... Let's see, right after we get ter Gringotts... Which one of yeh has the list?" Hagrid asked suddenly, looking at them.

"Right here, Hagrid." AJ answered, pulling out a neatly folded piece of paper from inside the pocket of her muggle jeans.

Harry peered over her shoulder as they read the list with widening eyes, Hagrid watching them curiously from where he sat beside them.

HOGWARTSSCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDY

UNIFORM

First Year Students Will Require:

1. *Three sets of plain work robes*
2. *One plain pointed hat (black) for every day wear*
3. *One pair of protective gloves (Dragon hide or similar)*

4. One winter cloak (*Black, silver fastenings*)

Please note that all pupils' clothes should carry name tags

COURSE BOOKS

All students should have a copy of each of the following:

The Standard Book of Spells (Grade One)

By Miranda Goshawk

A History of Magic by Bathilda Bagshot

Magical Theory by Adalbert Waffling

A Beginners' Guide to Transfiguration by Emeric Switch

One Thousand Magical Herbs and Fungi by Phyllida Spore

Magical Drafts and Potions by Arsenius Jigger

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them by Newt Scamander

The Dark Forces: A Guide to Self Protection by Quentin Trimble

OTHER EQUIPMENT

1 wand

1 cauldron (pewter, standard size 2)

1 set glass or crystal phials

1 telescope

1 set brass scales

Students may also bring an owl OR a cat OR a toad

PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT FIRST YEARS ARE NOT ALLOWED THEIR OWN BROOMSTICKS

“Can we buy all this in London?!” AJ asked incredulously, her eyes wide with shock and disbelief.

“Do any of it even exist?” Harry added, looking at Hagrid.

Hagrid gave them a smile, his eyes twinkling mischievously. “Well of course they exist, Harry! Yeh just have ter know where ter go!” He quipped to the two wide-eyed children as they stepped off the train.

The twins followed him silently as Hagrid led them through London until they reached a grubby looking pub in between two buildings in which Harry had a strange suspicion that only magical people could see.

“Here we are! The leaky cauldron! It’s a famous place for us magical people!” Hagrid boomed, trying to usher the twins inside.

Harry was just about to nudge his sister about something when Hagrid pushed them inside the dark place where people were hanging out but as they saw Hagrid walk into the tiny pub, they stopped and watched him in silence.

They all seemed to smile at Hagrid, nodding and smiling at him as the bartender gave Hagrid a friendly smile. “The usual, Hagrid?” He asked.

Hagrid shook his head, grinning proudly as he placed a hand each on Harry and AJ’s shoulders.

“Sorry, Tom, no can do! I’m here on official Hogwarts business!” He beamed, squeezing the twins’ shoulders, making them both cringe in pain.

Everyone suddenly turned to stare at the twins in shock and awe as Harry growled to himself and pinched AJ to get her attention, leaning over to whisper something to her.

"This is really getting on my nerves!" He hissed shaking his head as AJ put a hand to her mouth to stifle a giggle.

"My dear Merlin... The Potter twins!" Tom, the bartender exclaimed, jumping out of the bar and leaping towards the twins with tears in his eyes.

"Aggh!!" Harry and AJ both yelled in surprise, ducking behind Hagrid as Tom missed them, crashing to the floor in a tangle of limbs.

Tom jumped back up immediately and seized Harry's hand, shaking it repeatedly as his other hand grabbed AJ's and shook it simultaneously with Harry's in absolute excitement.

"Such an honor to meet you both! Welcome back Mr. and Ms. Potter! Welcome back indeed!" Tom exclaimed, his eyes sparkling.

AJ could only give a small smile and nod in return as Harry hid a smirk, just barely inclining his head in a nod.

Before Hagrid could stop anyone else, everyone else began rushing towards them, wanting to shake their hands and meet them up close.

Hagrid waited as the twins shook hands to everyone in the pub, AJ giving polite and warm smiles as Harry just looked bored, barely paying attention as he just continued to nod and raise his lips in a half-smile, half-cringe.

"Harry! AJ! This is Prof. Quirrell! He'll be one of your teachers at Hogwarts!" Hagrid told them as a young, pale man stepped forward shakily towards the twins.

"The P-Potter t-twins! Such a p-p-pleasure to f-finally m-meet you!" Prof. Quirrell croaked out, shaking first Harry's hand, then AJ's with his cold, clammy one.

"What subject do you teach, Professor?" AJ asked him curiously, peering at him with curious emerald-eyes.

"D-Defense Against the D-Dark Arts, Ms. Potter! Not that you t-two n-need it eh?" He added, giving them both a shaky grin.

Harry's eyes flashed at the mention of the subject. "Defense against the Dark Arts?! Doesn't Hogwarts have a Dark Arts subject itself?" He asked curiously, making AJ nudge him.

Prof. Quirrell looked absolutely spooked, looking around as though he expected someone to jump at him any second while the people around them looked scandalized.

"D-Dark Arts?! H-heavens, no, Mr. P-Potter! Hogwarts does not teach D-Dark Arts to its students! It is t-too d-d-dangerous!" Prof. Quirrell stuttered, visibly shaking with nervousness.

Harry's eyes narrowed, trying to hide his disappointment and anger but AJ stepped forward, nudging him aside.

"I'm very eager to start learning, Prof. Quirrell... Care to give me what we'll be studying?" She asked excitedly, ignoring her brother, who rolled his eyes and whispered something that sounded suspiciously like "geek" under his breath.

Before Prof. Quirrell could respond, the people started to gather around them again, frisking the twins for a couple more agitating minutes before Hagrid finally pulled them away, waving the people away.

"We have a lot ter buy so we had best better be off! Come on now, you two." Hagrid said, ushering the twins through the bar into a small, walled courtyard just as people continued to wave goodbye to them, still grinning like they had met Merlin himself.

"Well, that was something I had better get used to..." Harry remarked sarcastically, rolling his eyes as Hagrid tapped a brick wall with his umbrella, causing a small hole to appear within the bricks and grow large enough for the three of them to fit.

"The entrance to our world... *The world of magic...* Welcome to *Diagon Alley*." Hagrid said, beaming as the twins' eyes widened for about the tenth time that day when they saw the twists and turns of the busy street full of witches and wizards of different ages.

Harry and AJ both turned around in circles as they followed Hagrid through the shop, both of them wishing they had about a hundred more eyes to see all the shops they were passing by.

As they passed by a particular store, Harry saw a couple of boys his age pressing their noses up against the window of the glass to peer at a gleaming broomstick, muttering something Harry only heard as "Nimbus Two Thousand! The fastest one yet!"

AJ watched with a big grin on her face as she saw a group of wizards and witches carrying their stuff out of a shop, all of them dressed in different colored robes.

"Here we are, Gringotts!" Hagrid told them as they approached a white building which was guarded by creatures Harry guessed were goblins since they were a head shorter than the twins. They all had a rather clever face, a pointy beard long feet and fingers.

Without knowing it, AJ shuddered and clasped her brother's hand tightly, making her look at her in concern and squeeze her hand in reassurance.

As they followed Hagrid through the large, silver doors, they saw about a hundred more goblins working inside behind counters and though there were a lot of doors, they saw that a couple more goblins kept leading people out of these.

Hagrid approached a counter, the twins behind him, as they watched him begin talking to a free goblin.

"Good morning. We'd like to take some money out of the Potters' vault please." Hagrid told the goblin cheerfully.

The goblin peered down at the awed twins curiously. "You have the key, sir?"

"Yup. I got it right here!" Hagrid said, taking the key out of his pocket and setting it down on the counter.

"And I have a letter from Dumbledore... It's about that you-know-what in vault you-know-which." Hagrid whispered to the goblin to prevent the twins from hearing what he had said.

The goblin read the letter carefully, as though he was inspecting it, before he nodded and called another goblin. "Griphook!"

Griphook, another goblin, began leading them down them towards one of the doors out of the hall.

"Hagrid? What were you whispering about earlier?" AJ asked him as they were led into a narrow stone passageway dimly lit by torches with small tracks on the floor.

Hagrid shook his head at them as they climbed into a cart Griphook had found for them. "Can't tell you that AJ... Dumbledore trusted me with that secret." Hagrid told her just before the girl let out a squeal when the cart sped off.

"Ouch!" Harry growled as he and AJ accidentally bumped their heads together, both of them grimacing in pain.

They couldn't move any more since the cart was speeding off with remarkable speed and both children were too stunned and amazed to do anything but stare at the blazing whir of colors around them, Hagrid looking rather green next to them.

They stopped across one small door in the passage wall, Griphook jumping out of the cart to unlock the door with the key Hagrid had given earlier.

Harry and AJ gasped as the door opened, green smoke billowing out of it before they were able to see humongous piles of gold coins and slightly smaller piles of silver and bronze ones, scattered all over the huge vault.

The piles were scattered throughout the entire vault that AJ doubted that even if she and Harry spent hundreds of galleons every day, it wouldn't be enough to spend all the money in this vault.

The golden piles were so big that they were even easily taller than Hagrid himself, making it extremely hard for the twins to see the very top since their necks were beginning to hurt from looking up at it.

Wouldn't want to be in here when those piles collapse... Harry thought, smirking to himself.

"This is all ours?!" Harry asked in disbelief, his jaw hanging open as he just stared in silence.

"Yeah, how come you didn't tell us our parent had it *this* big?!" AJ exclaimed, laughing in absolute shock.

"Well... I did, actually. Yer father did not only inherit the entire Potter fortune but he also had a pretty darn good job at the ministry during his time... Never got around to tell yeh, that though..." Hagrid said sheepishly, grinning at them.

Still choking with absolute awe, Harry and AJ began to load their large bags with mounds of gold and by the time they were heading back to the cart, their bags were as heavy as hell and Hagrid had to help them haul the bags into the cart.

Hagrid then turned to Griphook, still looking rather sick after the last cart ride. "Right, well can we head on ter vault 713 now please? And do yeh reckon we can go a little slower this time?" He asked.

"One speed only." Griphook said flatly before AJ squealed again when they sped off, she and Harry laughing, obviously enjoying the ride, as Hagrid began groaning beside them again.

As they stopped in front of another vault, Harry had to notice that it had no keyhole as he got up and stood in front of it in question.

"Stand back." Griphook said importantly, taking one long finger and stroking the vault's door with it. The twins took a step back as the door melted away, Hagrid still looking rather ill beside them.

"If anyone besides Gringotts goblin tried that, they'd be sucked inside the vault." Griphook told them.

"How often do you check if someone's in there?" AJ asked him.

"About once every ten years." He said with a rather nasty smile on his face. Harry laughed along with him, looking amused by the idea just as Hagrid stepped into the completely dark, empty vault and picked up a small, brown package on the floor.

Harry and AJ exchanged curious, interested looks but they knew better than to ask about it so they just kept their mouths shut, stepping back into the cart with Hagrid.

"Well, that's that. Come on, we better get started on yer school supplies. Just don't talk ter me on the way... I'm going ter be sick..." Hagrid grumbled.

Harry and AJ both stepped into a shop called *Madam Malkin's Robes for All Occasions*, looking around for some assistance since Hagrid had told them to go on ahead without him, still looking sick as he headed to the Leaky Cauldron for a drink.

Deciding that they had better get their school robes first, Harry and AJ had headed first towards the Robe shops excitedly, their pockets jingling with money since they had decided to leave their heavy bags of money with Hagrid first, not wanting to haul them around themselves.

"Hey, uh... Harry?" AJ asked just as the two looked around the shop in silence. Harry turned to look at her, his eyebrow raised in question.

AJ's eyes were twinkling as she gave him a grin, casually flipping a gold galleon in the air with one hand.

"What do you say we not only buy our school robes but also a whole wardrobe of robes? I don't know about you but I've had just about enough of these disgusting *rags* the Dursleys give us... I mean, if we are a part of the distinguished, Potter family, we might as well look like we are, right?" She pointed out, her eyes sparkling vibrantly.

Harry laughed, looking thoughtful. "That's a great idea AJ but you mean to tell me, you want to wear witch and wizard robes in front of muggles all our lives?" He asked her pointedly.

AJ rolled her eyes, looking annoyed.

"Of course not, idiot! I just meant we should buy a whole set of robes now so that we actually look like magical people when we stroll around with... Um... *our* kind of people... We can just let the Dursleys buy our muggle clothing for us once we know a few good spells to scare them." She said smugly.

Harry smirked at her, nodding in agreement.

"Pretty good, sis... I've just had about enough of these disgusting muggle clothes we have to wear... After all, as Hagrid said, we are *Potters* and we deserve a hell of a lot more better clothes than these!" He said in disdain, not noticing that witch had come up behind them with a friendly smile on her face.

"Hogwarts, dears?" She asked them kindly. The twins nodded, the smirks still plastered on their faces.

"And also some everyday robes for casual wear, Madam... In different colors." AJ added, her smirk breaking out into a charming smile.

The witch nodded and ushered the inside the shop where they saw another young boy just Harry's age standing on a stool, being fitted with his own black robes, a bored, unimpressed expression on his handsome, aristocratic face.

AJ couldn't help but stare at the extremely handsome boy curiously as the witch stood her and her brother up on a stool as well. AJ watched as the boy seemed to snap out of his bored stupor when he saw the other two children next to him, peering at them in curiosity.

Still slightly staring, AJ couldn't help notice that the boy had the most beautiful eyes she had ever seen... They were dazzling silver... Similar to his gelled back hair which was of silver-blonde in color, shining in the light... And judging by the way he stood and the air of sophistication he had around him, AJ could tell this boy came from a rather rich, dignified family as well...

Harry, who, being on AJ's other side, hadn't noticed other boy in the room, didn't notice his gaping sister as he continued to mumble and complain childishly to the witch who was measuring his robes for him.

The boy seemed to smirk slightly, his eyes sparkling with mischief as the witch began pinning the robes on AJ's slim form, his eyes trailing up and down her with something AJ knew was more than just a curious glance.

Flushing with anger, indignation and humiliation all at once, AJ snapped out of her trance long enough to growl and raise a hand to slap the boy next to her painfully on his pale cheek.

The boy's jaw dropped in shock as he clutched his cheek in pain where now a red mark was now forming, his silver eyes flashing in anger as well.

"Hey! You little witch! What the bloody hell was that for?!" He snarled, sneering at her.

AJ sneered right back just as Harry glanced over at her in surprise, finally noticing the other boy in the room with them.

"You shouldn't look at young girls like that, you jerk! It's very rude indeed!" She snapped, her face scowling at the boy in front of her.

The boy seemed to look at her in surprise for a minute before he let out an amused laugh, still clutching his cheek as he offered her a lopsided grin.

"AJ!" Harry hissed, shaking his head in embarrassment.

"Well he started it!" AJ snapped back, still scowling at the smirking boy beside her.

The boy just laughed again as Harry rolled his eyes, joining the boy in laughter.

From what he could see, this boy definitely looked like someone very important and Harry figured that if he wanted to make good, powerful, influential and loyal friends in the wizarding world, he better start now.

"I'm sorry about that, mate... You see my sister here is pretty sensitive about guys looking at her. Kind of a man hater really." He remarked, giving his sister a taunting smirk.

The boy seemed to accept the apology, nodding at Harry in acknowledgement, looking at him suspiciously as though he was seizing him up if he was deciding if Harry was worth being friendly to or not.

Not one to be intimidated by this, Harry responded by doing the same, raising an eyebrow in challenge and easily holding his own against the boy.

After a long silence, the boy offered Harry a friendly half-smile, looking rather impressed by his display of challenge.

"You look like someone who has a good head on his shoulders... You're the first guy I met who didn't cower away when I gave him a glare like that... I like it..." He said, smirking.

"Well maybe that's because I give that glare to almost every jerk I pass that gets on my nerves." Harry retorted sarcastically.

The boy laughed, nodding. "Is that right? You going to Hogwarts too?" He asked them, peering at the black school robes that the witch was pinning onto him.

AJ just rolled her eyes, still blushing after the whole slap thing as she gave the two boys a glare.

"Maybe we should exchange positions so you two can talk more easily." She suggested to Harry, who shrugged and nodded before the two switched stools.

"Yup, first year." Harry answered, nodding.

"Father's next door buying my books while mother is off buying my wands. I'm thinking of persuading them to buy me a new racing broom, it's such a piss off that first years are not allowed to have their own." The boy drawled, rolling his eyes.

Harry was slightly surprised at hearing the cuss word but he shrugged, smirking in amusement.

"I know what you mean. Frankly, if I were you, I wouldn't really care, why don't you just bully your father into getting you one and smuggle it in?" He suggested flippantly, shrugging.

The boy grinned in agreement, making AJ blush furiously but she turned away before the two could notice, muttering to herself.

"Yeah, I bet I could... Have you got your broom yet?" The boy asked him.

"Not yet but I'm hoping to buy one later... It's not like I can't afford it anyway." Harry said smugly, flashing the boy a self-satisfied smile which the boy easily returned, looking more impressed and friendlier by the minute.

"Same here... Glad we're on the same wavelength... Play Quidditch at all?" The boy asked.

Harry raised an eyebrow curiously, shaking his head. "Hmm... Not really... Is that a sport or something?" He asked, his eyes twinkling in interest.

The boy nodded eagerly, giving him an excited smile. "You'll love it, I swear. I play it all the time and father says it's a crime if I don't get picked for the house team." He said haughtily.

Harry laughed, nodding. He was starting to like this boy more and more by the minute... They seemed to have a lot of things in common from their confidence, their interests and the way they expressed themselves.

"That sounds really cool, maybe you can show me when we get to Hogwarts." Harry said, grinning.

The boy grinned back, shrugging before another lopsided grin graced his face.

“Sure, if you like. Know what house you’ll be in?” He asked, this time raising an eyebrow as though he was cautious of the answer Harry was going to give.

“Hmm... Not really... What do you reckon is the best one?” Harry said, remembering exactly what Hagrid had told them about the different houses right before they had left the Dursleys’ shack earlier that day.

The boy looked at him as though he was mad.

“Are you bloody crazy? Of course, Slytherin is the best one, I’m already pretty sure that I’m in Slytherin. *Everyone* in my family was in Slytherin, of course. I wouldn’t fancy being in Hufflepuff though...” He said, shuddering in disgust.

“Sounds interesting. I hear Gryffindor is also a good house, by the way... Is that true?” Harry asked, genuinely interested.

The boy gave a laugh, sneering at Harry as though he was stupid.

“Goody-two-shoes Gryffindor?? That is the dorkiest house you could ever imagine and in my opinion, every witch or wizard in there are a bunch of losers... Still, I have to admit it’s better than Hufflepuff though... Where did you get such a stupid idea?” He asked, sneering at him.

Harry’s eyes narrowed dangerously as he glared threateningly at the boy in front of him, his glare letting the other boy know that he wasn’t the type to be pushed around or intimidated that easily.

“Don’t mock me, I’m not the type to take something like that lying down... I’m a lot stronger than you might think so I assure you, you wouldn’t want to mess with me like that...” He threatened darkly, his voice frighteningly calm and controlled.

The boy seemed to look outraged for a minute, his silver eyes flashing in anger as the both of them glaring at each other to see which one would dare look away first.

AJ looked back and forth in between them in tense nervousness, biting her lip as she saw the malicious, cold anger in her brother's eyes which refused to back down due to his righteous pride and ego.

Then, as though he had been amazed and approving of Harry's response to his taunt, the boy's snarl suddenly turned upwards into a genuine, friendly and impressed smile, raising an eyebrow in acknowledgment as he offered Harry a hand.

"You're not afraid of a good challenge... And you don't let people walk all over you... You don't take a fight lying down...The qualities of a Slytherin... I like that..." He commented, smirking.

Harry's eyed the hand as though he was deciding if the boy was sincere about what he had just said before he offered a smirk back, giving the hand a firm shake.

"Do you by any chance know what subjects there are at Hogwarts?" Harry asked casually.

The boy seemed to ponder the question, rolling his eyes at the thought.

"Not really that interesting... I hear Potions and Transfiguration are the only subjects worth learning there... I can't believe they don't even have the Dark Arts... Just *Defense* against the Dark Arts... I mean, who wants to learn defense?" The boy commented, snorting.

Harry looked at him in surprise, his lips quirking into a smile. "You read my mind...That's exactly what I said..." He agreed, rolling his eyes.

The boy offered a smirk as his eyes twinkled with approval once again, nodding.

Then, as though he had finally once again noticed her, the boy turned to look at AJ, who was watching them in confusion.

"Are you by any chance related? You two look quite alike..." He commented, flashing AJ a smile again.

Harry raised an eyebrow, laughing. "Yeah, she's my sister." He answered.

"Does she always slap guys who look at her?" He asked, still smirking.

"Only when their gaze is something more than mere curiosity..." AJ snapped back in irritation, flushing to herself in embarrassment.

Harry and the boy both laughed at the same time, as though they shared a private joke, looking at each other in surprise when they did.

"Well, it would be hard *not* to look at you, you are very pretty." The boy said, his pale cheeks tingeing slightly with pink.

Despite her will to keep her dignity, she blushed again, this time out of pleasure as she gave the boy a small, shy smile.

"T-thanks.." She managed to say, looking away again.

Harry watched the two very closely, narrowing his eyes in suspicion but before he could say anything, the boy had looked at the shop window, his eyes widening at the sight of Hagrid, who was outside pointing to three large ice cream cones to indicate he couldn't come in.

"I say! Look at that man!" The boy exclaimed, raising an eyebrow curiously.

Harry looked at Hagrid for a minute before shrugging and nodding to the witch, who was holding up an emerald-colored robe right after she had finished measuring Harry's school ones.

"That's Hagrid, he's the gamekeeper at Hogwarts." He explained just as the witch began pinning the robes to him again.

"Oh I see... Isn't he a servant there?" The boy asked, a hint of disdain on his voice as he stared at the giant-sized man.

"He might be but he's really nice. He's been showing us around now and we came here with him." AJ told him as a witch began measuring robes on her the same color as Harry's.

"Oh... Well...Where are your parents then?" The boy asked, peering at her in question.

"They're dead." Harry answered for her quietly, looking away as the witch in front of him began holding up different colors of robes in different kinds of fabric.

There was a tense silence for a minute before the boy looked at the both of them intently, looking like he wanted to eat his words.

"Sorry..." He muttered, dropping his eyes.

"Forget it." Harry responded, nodding.

"They were *our* kind though, weren't they?" The boy asked cautiously, fusing his eyebrows together.

"They were a witch and wizard, if that's what you're implying." Harry answered darkly just as AJ sighed, shaking her head.

"Of course... I just don't think that... Well...I don't think they should bring in the other sort... They're not the same; they haven't been brought up in our ways... I reckon they should just keep it in the old, prominent wizarding families...Are you from an old wizarding family?" The boy asked.

AJ opened her mouth to respond but Harry held up a hand, answering the question himself. "Of course we are. Can't you tell?" He answered, smirking.

"What's your surname by the way?" The boy asked.

Before either Harry or AJ could answer him, Madam Malkin gave the twins a smile, nodding as they ushered them off the stool.

"That's all, my dears. All your new robes are outside, school robes, dress robes and casual ones." Madam Malkin told them, giving them a friendly smile.

Harry and AJ both hopped off the stool, giving the boy one more last smile as they exited the room.

"Well, it was a pleasure meeting you both. I'll see you at Hogwarts I suppose." The boy said, grinning at them.

Harry grinned back as AJ merely nodded, still a bit red in the face.

"I'd like that. See you then." He said, nodding at him just before the twins both stepped out, paying for their robes at the counter and walking out towards Hagrid, who was waiting for them outside with the ice cream cones.

Just as they were outside, Harry looked up curiously at Hagrid, fusing his eyebrows in confusion.

"Hagrid, what's Quidditch?" He asked, raising an eyebrow in question.

Hagrid looked at him as though he was crazy but he gave a short laugh, shaking his head in disbelief.

"Blimey, I keep forgetting how little yeh both know, not knowing about Quidditch!" Hagrid exclaimed.

"Don't make us feel worse Hagrid..." AJ murmured as Harry began launching questions at Hagrid again, now much more curious than he had been before on the boat.

AJ kept silent as Hagrid explained all about Quidditch to Harry, her brother's eyes twinkling in excitement as he learned about the popular sport.

"That sounds absolutely amazing! I'm going to buy myself a broom right now!" Harry exclaimed, trying to race off but Hagrid grabbed him by the collar, pulling him back down.

"No can do, Harry. First years are not allowed brooms and I'm not about ter let yeh buy one now... Yeh can buy one when yeh get ter yer second year now why don't we go off now and get both yer wands?" He suggested when he noticed that both the twins' ice creams were finished.

Harry growled at having been stopped, muttering to himself as AJ rolled her eyes, giving her brother an annoyed look.

“Boys...” She muttered under her breath, shaking her head.

The three of them headed off to more stores at first, buying all the materials on the list exactly as they were listed since Hagrid wouldn’t allow them to buy anything else that wasn’t listed on the list.

Harry was still acting like a five-year-old as he complained to himself, still whining about not being allowed to buy a broom, just as they were about to enter the wand shop so Hagrid stopped abruptly and gave them both a smile.

“Well... Just yer wands left now... I’ll tell yeh what, why don’t yeh both go in and get yer wands and I’ll buy yeh both yer birthday gifts.” He said, ushering them in.

AJ and Harry both turned to look at him in surprise.

“No, but you don’t have to—”

But Hagrid had already gone, walking off and shrugging, the twins sighed and entered the wand shop, both of them looking around at the thousands of long, tiny boxes piled all around them, the silence of the shop reminding Harry of a library.

Before anything else, a man suddenly came up behind the twins, his pale eyes twinkling mysteriously behind his spectacles as he inspected the twins in absolute delight.

“Good day to you, Mr. and Ms. Potter. I am Mr. Ollivander, at your service.” He greeted, making the twins both jump in surprise, whirling around to face the man.

Mr. Ollivander peered curiously at both the twins’ forehead, eyeing both scars for a minute before he smiled again, unknowingly making AJ tense in nervousness.

“Er... Hello...” She greeted uncomfortably as Harry still eyed the man in suspicion, his emerald eyes narrowed.

“Yes... I wondered when I’d be seeing you two here... It was almost yesterday when I remember your mother and father buying their first

wands here as well..." Mr. Ollivander drawled, walking over to an aisle of wand boxes.

"Ten and a quarter inches long... Swishy... Made of willow... Excellent for charm work..." Mr. Ollivander murmured to himself, pulling out a small box.

"Yes... How well I remember... Your father preferred a mahogany wand...Eleven inches...Pliable... A little more power and quite excellent for transfiguration I recall..." Mr. Ollivander continued, walking over to the twins.

Sadly, he fingered the scars on their foreheads, shaking his head in guilt.

"Sadly, I also remember the very wands that gave you those scars... Yes... Thirteen and a half inches... Yew...Very powerful indeed..." He said, sighing.

Harry and AJ didn't say anything, both of them suddenly very interested in their feet before Mr. Ollivander spoke again, this time in a much more cheerful tone of voice.

"Well, then, who's going first?" He asked, peering at the two of them curiously through his spectacles.

Harry raised his hand. "I am." He said, stepping forward so Mr. Ollivander could inspect him.

"Which is your wand hand then, Mr. Potter?" Mr. Ollivander asked, both of them not noticing AJ, who had gone off through an aisle of wands by herself, peering at them curiously.

"Well... I suppose, my right hand since I'm right handed." Harry answered, shrugging as he held out his right hand.

Mr. Ollivander began measuring it with a tape measure, speaking in a low tone that only Harry could understand.

"Every Ollivander wand is unique, Mr. Potter... Each one has a core of a magical substance... Unicorn hair, phoenix tail feathers and

heartstrings of dragons... Not one of these creatures are the same just as no two wizards or witches are the same... And of course, you will never get the best results from another wizard's wand." Mr. Ollivander explained.

Mr. Ollivander walked over to a shelf and took out a wand, giving the smooth piece of wood over to Harry. "Okay then, Mr. Potter, try this, Beechwood and dragon heartstring, nine inches, nice and flexible... Just give it a wave." He said.

Feeling rather foolish and eyebrow raised slightly in amusement at the weird, old man, Harry waved it around but Mr. Ollivander snatched it out of his hand almost immediately, giving him another wand in replacement.

"Maple and phoenix feather, seven inches, whippy. Try—"

Harry waved it again but Mr. Ollivander snatched it out the same way he had the first one and placed yet another wand in his hand.

"No, no! Here, ebony and unicorn hair, eight and a half inches, rather springy. Go on, try it out." Mr. Ollivander quipped again but before Harry had even managed to raise the wand halfway, it was snatched out of his grasp again.

Gritting his teeth to hide his annoyance, Harry watched as the pile of wands beside him grew bigger and bigger, Mr. Ollivander pulling one wand out after another.

"Hmm... Trick customer eh? Not to worry, I have another one right here... Hmm... Unusual combination...But then again, every single Potter I've known has always had quite unusual wand combinations...Holly and Phoenix feather...Eleven inches... Nice and supple.." Mr. Ollivander muttered, handing the wand over to Harry.

The minute Harry had taken the wand, he felt an unusual warmth in his fingers, and almost immediately, he raised the wand over his head and brought it swishing down the air, green and silver sparks shooting out of it like fireworks.

Mr. Ollivander looked ecstatic, grinning at the boy as he began putting the chosen wand into a box, stroking his chin as he did.

"Hmm...Curious... Very curious..." He murmured, his eyebrows fused together in thought.

"What's curious?" AJ asked, startling them both as she walked back into the room, carrying a long, wand box behind her.

"AJ! Where did you go off to?" Harry hissed, giving his sister a stern look but she ignored it, giving Mr. Ollivander a curious glance.

"What's curious Mr. Ollivander?" She asked, her eyes looking at him in question.

Mr. Ollivander stroked his chin before answering.

"Well...You see Ms. Potter... I remember every wand I've sold... *Every single one of them...* And I recall... Oh yes, how I do recall...It seems very curious that you are to be destined with this wand, Mr. Potter... When its brother wand...Gave you both those scars..." He whispered.

Harry's hands clenched themselves into tight angry fists, his eyes flashing dangerously in anger for a moment as AJ shuddered involuntarily, shaking her head in disbelief.

"I think this means that we can expect great things from you, Mr. Potter... After all, you-know who himself did great things... Terrible, yes... But great..." Mr. Ollivander whispered again, still eyeing the scars on their heads.

There was an eerie silence in the room as Harry glared at the floor calmly, as though he was controlling the anger and rage AJ could see in his eyes that were threatening to burst out once again as it had in the Dursleys' shack so clearing her throat, she decided to stray their attention away to something else.

"Well, Ms. Potter, what have you got there?" Mr. Ollivander asked, opening the box that AJ had handed him.

"Well... I was just walking through the aisle and somehow... I don't know how it happened but I led myself to this particular wand... It was buried and hidden in the very corner of the shop so I wasn't so sure if it was for sale or if it was a working wand but somehow... I know you're going to think this is crazy but I felt it drawing me to it... I don't know..." AJ explained, shrugging.

The minute Mr. Ollivander opened the wand, he looked back at AJ with wide, surprised eyes, staring at her in disbelief.

"You... You felt this particular wand *calling* you, Ms. Potter?" He asked incredulously, taking out the wand and inspecting it intently.

AJ gave a nervous laugh as Harry looked at her in surprise. "I know it sounds utterly crazy and impossible but—"

"This wand has never been chosen before... I was beginning to think it was cursed or broken because it never seemed to work with any other witch or wizard before... I even thought it was broken or a dud so I put it in the corner of the shop where no one would find it... You say it called you, yes?" Mr. Ollivander asked AJ curiously.

AJ paled, nodding at him. "Y-yes... I don't know how but I just felt it did..." She muttered, shaking her head at her own words.

"You see Ms. Potter... This was the only wand... The *only* wand I had ever made in which I used a strand from the hair of a particularly beautiful veela... Mind you, I have *never* used veela hair before... And I never will again, that's for sure... It was rather difficult to make a wand with veela hair..." Mr. Ollivander explained.

"What's a veela?" AJ asked but Mr. Ollivander continued, not hearing her question.

"Rather odd too because the wand never seemed to work... Or at least, never worked before and that was why I was beginning to think it was broken... It was after all, the first time I ever attempted to make such a wand... Veela hair isn't usually my style... Makes the wand rather delicate and easily broken if not taken care of properly..." Mr. Ollivander murmured.

"Erm, What's a veela, Mr. Ollivander?" Harry asked, looking confused but the old man wasn't paying attention, still murmuring to himself as he inspected the wand more closely.

"And what a dangerous veela that was... Rather innocent looking though... I had thought I had it easy when I pulled a strand of her hair out but right after, she turned on me, nearly killing me but I got away, as always... Rather foolish of me to attempt to use it though since up until now, nobody has ever managed to cast a spell with this wretched thing but you never know Ms. Potter... Try it out." He said, placing the wand in her hand.

AJ raised an eyebrow at him, peering at the wand in her hand curiously as she felt the warmth of it through her fingertips.

"Odd combination as well, ten and a quarter inches... and aside from a strand from a veela, Holly... Smooth and inflexible... Well, give it a wave..." Mr. Ollivander prodded.

AJ flicked it casually and just as Harry's had earlier, the wand began to emit sparks from the tip, causing Harry to grin at his twin and Mr. Ollivander's jaw to drop open in absolute shock.

"Well, well, well.. It seems as though the Potters' tradition of having the strangest wand combinations continue... I truly wonder now, exactly what greatness you both can achieve with both your new wands.. Remember, it is the wand that chooses the wizard... Take care of them well, Mr. and Ms. Potter... I hope to see you both again..." He said, giving them a creepy smile.

AJ and Harry both exchanged nervous looks before they paid for both their wands, hastily exiting the store only to bump into Hagrid, who was waiting for them outside carrying something that made both Harry and AJ's jaws drop open in shock.

"Happy birthday!" He exclaimed, grinning at the twins as they stared in shock at the two owl cages he carried, one with a beautiful, snowy white owl, and another with a handsome, eagle owl, both asleep in their cages.

"H-Hagrid... You didn't have to.... Do this..." AJ croaked out as Hagrid handed her the male owl, ruffling her hair affectionately.

"Y-yeah..." Harry managed to say as Hagrid handed him his own female snowy one, his hands shaking.

"Aw, don't mention it yeh two, I figured yeh both aren't used ter receiving presents so its an honor ter be the first one ter give yeh a real birthday present. Now come on, we have ter catch the train back to yer muggle relatives so yeh can stay with them for the remainder of yer summer before goin off ter Hogwarts." Hagrid said cheerfully, leading the twins through the streets again.

"Oops, I almost forgot! Here are yer tickets for Hogwarts. September the first at Platform Nine and Three Quarters at King's Cross station." Hagrid said, handing Harry an envelope as they continued to walk down the streets, their arms loaded with supplies.

"Hey, uh... Hagrid?" Harry asked, looking up at the giant sized man in front of him.

Hagrid turned to look down at the twins, who both gave him a warm smile in return.

"Thanks." They both said.

"For what?" Hagrid asked, giving them a smile in return.

"For...For everything and most of all, for... For finally letting us know who we truly are..."

A/N: Well... there you are! Hehe.. God this chapter honestly sucked! But of course, before I start rambling off again, I want to hear what you guys think so PLEASE review!!

I hoped you like the changes I added about Harry and AJ's family line and their fortune and everything else! I just thought I'd spice things up a bit, wouldn't you? Heehee! And I hoped you also liked the encounter with a certain silver-blonde boy we all know and love! Heehee! We're really starting to go off here! Next chapter, you can expect to finally see the train ride to Hogwarts, Harry and Draco

finally meeting and of course, the sorting ceremony! Heehee! Aren't we excited?! Well, I hoped you guys enjoyed that crappy chapter! I swear, I'll make it up to you in the next one!

Chapter 5- Hands of Friendship

“Where the hell are we?!” Harry snapped at his sister as they walked around the train station, people looking at them as though they were crazy carrying around two owl cages.

AJ gritted her teeth in frustration, biting back her snappy reply at her brother. She didn’t know why he had suddenly turned into such a surly person but during their whole last month with the Dursleys, he had done nothing else but scare the Dursleys out of their wits with his newfound temper.

Even Dudley was now terrified of him, fleeing out of the room whenever Harry or AJ would enter and squeaking in fear whenever Harry aimed a death glare at the poor boy.

Sure, it had been a great improvement on their part since the Dursleys no longer forced them to do any chores or nag them about senseless things but it can get pretty boring sometimes since they just kept their mouths shut as though they were afraid to say anything else.

More to keep herself busy than anything else, AJ had spent the rest of the summer reading all their new schoolbooks, memorizing every inch of text written on them much to Harry’s great annoyance.

His twin sister had always been a sucker for school... Even then when they were studying in a muggle school, AJ was always the highest in class while Harry had never actually cared about his grades...

Instead of studying like his sister did, Harry had just began familiarizing himself more with his female owl, which he had named *Hedwig*, and since AJ had given him the right to name hers, he had named her male owl *Ferio*.

That very morning, Uncle Vernon had driven them to King’s Cross station to catch the train that Hagrid had told them about at Platform 9 and 3/4 but as soon as AJ had told Harry this, he had gone ballistic, saying there was no such thing as Platform 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$, claiming she must have gotten the name wrong.

The twins had spent the entire time arguing and yelling at each other, not minding the stares of the people around them as they frantically searched for their platform.

Harry furiously ran a hand through his hair again, turning impatient, irritated eyes at his sister as he gestured wildly to the platforms in front of them.

“See! There, platform 9 and platform 10! There is no platform 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$! Where are we supposed to go now, *genius*?” He demanded angrily, his eyes flashing.

AJ glared right back, scowling at him in righteous anger. “Stop yelling at me, Harry! I know what I heard! Hagrid told us to catch the train at platform 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$! I—”

Harry held up a hand to shut her up, his eyes widening considerably as he heard a woman’s voice as she passed by them.

“...packed with muggles of course!” She chattered, walking past them with a group of redheaded children hurrying after her to catch up.

Harry and AJ looked at each other, both of them nodding before they hurried after the redheaded group, following them to the middle of platform 9 and 10 and watching as the woman beckoned one of the redheaded boys forward, handing him his ticket.

“Go on then Percy! You first!” She said, nodding as the tallest boy walked forward carrying his trunk to the barrier between platform 9 and 10, disappearing just as he was about to hit the wall, making the Harry and AJ’s eyes widen in disbelief.

The twins watched with gaping jaws as two other identical redheaded boys came next whom the woman called as “Fred and George”, disappearing the same way the first boy had right between platform 9 and 10.

AJ nudged Harry, leaning over to whisper something in his ear.

"I think that wall is like a magical barrier or something that leads to platform 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$... I *told* you I heard right!" She hissed smugly, smirking at him.

Harry rolled his eyes but nodded, looking curiously at her. "How the hell do we get through that thing?" He hissed back just as they watched the woman beckon what looked like her youngest son forward.

AJ just shrugged, giving him a reckless grin. "We just go through. Come on, let's go! This is going to be fun!" She squealed, rushing forward towards the platform with an excited grin on her face.

"AJ! Watch out for—" Harry cringed, shaking his head as AJ crashed into the young redhead boy, making them both sprawl ungracefully on the ground.

The woman rushed over to help them up, giving her son a disgruntled look.

"Oh dear, Ron! You should apologize to this young lady here! I'm so sorry my dear!" The woman said, helping AJ up before giving her son another stern glare, helping him up as well just as Harry reached them.

"I-I'm sorry! It was my fault, really, I—" The boy stopped midsentence as he stared at AJ's emerald eyes, his nervousness turning into awe and disbelief as his eyes flicked over to her forehead.

AJ could help but notice the boy's cute features.... His red hair was currently disheveled slightly while his blue eyes were sparkling with curiosity and warmth, a lopsided grin on his face which gave him that sort of innocent, sweet look about him.

He had that boy-next-door look about him that caught her slightly off guard but she shrugged it off, too annoyed at the moment to care.

Judging from the way he was squirming uncomfortably under Harry's challenging glare, AJ could tell that this was the type of boy whom she could actually learn to like...He was exactly her type...

Nervous, AJ covered her scar with her bangs, giving the boy an annoyed look as she dusted herself clean, shaking her head.

"It's quite alright ma'am, though my brother and I must be getting on our way... Pleasure bumping into you uh—"

"Ronald Weasley... Pleasure but just call me Ron. This is my mum and my younger sister Ginny. Are you both going to Hogwarts this year too?" He asked curiously, looking from AJ to Harry, who was right beside her, glaring at Ron in annoyance and disdain.

Harry could only nod silently, not wanting to talk while AJ gave the three Weasleys a smile, nodding as well. "Yes, we're quite excited actually... This is our first time." She answered.

The woman beside Ron smiled back, gesturing to the platform.

"Well, maybe you three can all become friends when the year starts... Speaking of school, you had all better get going now; the train is just about to leave." She said, ushering the three of them towards the platform.

Ron turned to the twins, nodding. "You two go on ahead, maybe I'll catch up with you guys later." He said, grinning.

"You wish..." Harry grumbled under his breath, making AJ nudge him in annoyance, sighing as they carried their trunks and headed over to the platform again, both of them taking it in a run, eyes shut in anticipation.

"Whoa..." AJ exclaimed as they eyed the huge train in front of them, sign in front of it reading "*Hogwarts Express, eleven o'clock*" and just near it, "*Platform 9 and ¾*".

AJ grinned and stuck her tongue out at her brother, who ignored it and walked ahead, cursing under his breath.

"What's your problem, jerk-face? And why did you have to be so unfriendly back there? That guy Ron seemed like a friendly guy." She said as she rushed after him, heaving her trunk along with her.

"Seemed too friendly for my liking..." Harry grumbled as he rudely shoved a boy out of his way, rolling his eyes as the boy reacted and glared at him.

AJ looked confused, looking at her brother in question. "What do you mean, Harry?" She asked, raising an eyebrow.

Harry didn't answer, leading them both towards the train as they both heaved their heavy trunks along with them, passing several families as they did.

"Hey there, you two want a hand with those heavy trunks?" A voice asked behind them just as they approached the train right before the two identical twin boys they had seen earlier with the redhead family appeared in front of them, giving them a friendly smile.

Harry stiffened, scowling as he looked the twins up and down in mild indignation. "No thank you, we've got everything under—"

"Sure would, you don't mind?" AJ interrupted, grinning as the two older boys grinned back and easily hoisted their trunks up and helped them find an empty compartment at the end of the train, Harry trailing after them in a sulk.

AJ rolled her eyes at her brother before she turned and gave the twins another smile, extending her hand. "Thank you so much, you are—"

One of the boys took her hand, smiling at her. "I'm Fred Weasley and this is my twin brother, George. But... Blimey, you're them aren't you?" He exclaimed, finally noticing the scar on her forehead.

Harry and AJ both raised an eyebrow. "Them?"

"The Potter twins! Boy, we didn't recognize you at first... Merlin, you two really look very much alike, don't you?" The other boy, George, added, peering at them curiously.

"Oh, them.... I mean, yeah, we are..." Harry grumbled, settling himself down the seat and silently staring out the window just as the other set of twins stared at them in awe and star struck amazement.

"Well, we better get going, it was nice meeting you both. Hope you two have a good first year at Hogwarts." Fred said, nodding before he and his twin ran out of the compartment, heading outside once more.

AJ sat down right next to him silently, taking out another spellbook to read while Harry watched the redheaded family outside argue and play around, the twins they had just met earlier hurriedly running up to their mother.

"Mum! Guess who we just saw on the train! It's Harry and Amanda Potter!" One of the twins exclaimed, making the smallest redhead, a little girl clinging onto her mother's hand, squeak in surprise.

"*Harry Potter?!*" She squeaked again, turning a dark shade of red.

AJ nudged Harry from where they were watching the redheads from their compartment window, smirking.

"Aw... Getting yourself some groupies already, eh Harry?" She teased, making her brother smirk back, shaking his head in amusement.

"Are you sure Fred?" The little girl asked again, her eyes as wide as saucers as she looked up at her brother.

"Course we are, Ginny! Saw their scars too! One shaped like lightning, the other a crescent moon! And plus, how often do you see another pair of twins at Hogwarts?" He answered, rolling his eyes.

"Well... I guess... Do you reckon they remember what you-know-who looks like?" Ron had asked the twins again, his eyes just as wide as his younger sister's.

Harry and AJ both rolled their eyes, turning their heads away from the window, not wanting to listen to the family's conversation anymore.

Yawning, Harry slumped in his seat and rested his head on his twin's shoulder, closing his eyes as he waited for the train to move.

AJ had just turned back to her book, reading it silently as they heard more students begin to pile up on the train, whispering and chattering excitedly outside their compartment.

After a couple of minutes, the train finally began to move, making Harry's eyes pop wide open and look outside, watching the scenery before them as they left the train station behind and began traveling on to a new destination.

He was just about to ask his sister something when the compartment door slid open again and Ron peered in along with another boy, looking sheepish as he met the twin's questioning gazes.

"Sorry... Do you mind? Everywhere else is full..." He said, shrugging as he looked at them expectantly.

Harry sneered and was about to say something sarcastic when AJ nudged him sharply, nodding warmly at Ron and the boy in reply.

"Go on ahead." She replied just as Ron and the other boy sat down, both of them peering curiously at the twins in awe and uncertainty.

"Well, you both already know me but this is Seamus Finnegan. We met the other day at Diagon Alley." Ron said, gesturing to the boy beside him who gave the twins a friendly smile, flushing slightly when AJ smiled back.

Harry barely inclined his head, turning to face the window darkly as the two boys struck up another question again.

"Are you both really the Potter twins?" Seamus squeaked out, his eyes widening in shock as he just realized what had just come out of his mouth.

Harry and AJ both nodded silently, not meeting their gazes.

"Then, you both have the... the scars?" Ron prodded, looking at their foreheads intently. Harry and AJ both smirked and raised up their bangs, showing their famous scars, making the two boys' eyes go even wider.

"Are all your family wizards?" Harry asked, a hint of arrogance in his voice as he did so.

"Well, Ron's family here are all magical but I'm a half-blood. My dad was a muggle while my mum was a witch." Seamus explained in a deep Irish accent, making AJ smile in amusement.

"I see... But all members of your family were all magical, er... Ron?" Harry asked, finally showing some interest now as he looked at the other boy.

Ron pondered on the question for a second, scrunching up his forehead in thought.

"I guess so... But honestly, magical blood or the traditional *strong family bloodline* rubbish has never really been important to our family... We're not as stuck-up as those old wizarding families such as the *Malfoys*..." He said, frowning at the name.

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Malfoys?" He asked curiously.

"Yeah... They're like this very rich family that cares about nothing but keeping their bloodline untainted by muggle blood... For some reason, I heard their whole family tree had powerful and famous wizards and witches... Most of them were dark though..." Ron told them, shuddering.

Harry's other eyebrow rose up now as well. "Hmm.. That's... *impressive*..." He said under his breath so that only AJ could hear him.

"Really? I read from this book I bought that the Malfoys were not only one of the richest but also one of the most powerful and influential pure-blooded families in their time... In fact, if I do recall in this book I read, *Pureblooded Magical Families Throughout History*, the only *other* family as rich and powerful as the Malfoys were the *Potters*." A girl interrupted, walking into the compartment to join them.

Harry's eyes widened considerably when he noticed that the girl was the same girl he and his sister had met at the zoo, having the same

bushy brown hair and rather large front teeth, a bright, friendly smile on her face.

Seeing his twin sister's teasing grin at him, Harry scowled at her, looking down at the floor darkly as a faint tinge of pink was visible on his cheeks, being the reason for him to glare even more.

Somehow, he felt an uncomfortable, tingling aura around this girl... Like she was going to be much more than just an annoying acquaintance to him sometime in the future but he couldn't really understand where he was getting a feeling like that from...

Probably just my imagination... He thought, shaking his head as he eyed the girl up and down, setting a calm, smirk-like smile on his young face.

The girl seemed to have realized the same thing Harry did as her eyes widened with recognition when she saw the twins in the compartment.

"Blimey! I knew my instincts were right! You're the twins I saw in the zoo weeks ago! Merlin, you must be *the* Harry and Amanda Potter! I knew it!" She exclaimed, plopping herself next to AJ.

AJ gave a half smile, half cringe as the girl excitedly shook her hand, flipping her bushy brown hair over her shoulder.

"I'm Hermione Granger! I believe we have met before but I never got your names... Such a pleasure!" She said, before dropping AJ's hand and shaking Harry's right after, her eyes gleaming.

"Merlin, I guess they were right in saying that the Potter twins were quite lookers..." She commented, peering at Harry, making AJ smirk teasingly at her twin brother again as he scowled in embarrassment in return, the faint tinge of pink on his pale cheeks darkening.

"I've read about you both in other books such as *Modern Magical History*, *The Rise and Fall of the Dark Arts*, and *Great Wizarding Events in the Twentieth Century*." She raved excitedly.

"We're in books?" Harry asked no one in particular, looking surprised.

Hermione didn't answer, finally realizing that there were other people in the compartment with them.

"Er... You are?" Hermione looked at Ron and Seamus, who were both gaping at her sudden entrance into the compartment, looking stunned.

"Er, uh, I'm Ron Weasley and this is Seamus Finnegan." He said as Seamus nodded dumbly, too shocked to speak.

"Oh, okay... Well, anyway, as I was saying, the Malfoys *and* Potters had high respect for one another and they were the only two remaining powerful wizarding families left today, both their bloodlines are very impressive, by the way... You must be really proud!" Hermione said, grinning at the twins.

"We... Didn't know..." AJ muttered under her breath just as Harry grinned back smugly, nodding.

"Course we are... How about *your* family?" He asked her back, looking at her intently.

Hermione blushed slightly in embarrassment, shrugging.

"My parents are both muggles so that would make me a muggleborn witch... Not a trace of magical blood in me... Guess that means I can cross Slytherin out of my list of possible houses." She said, making the two other boys laugh in agreement.

AJ wrinkled her eyebrows. "What do you mean?" She asked in keen interest.

Hermione frowned slightly, looking unsure of herself.

"Well... I'm not really sure, I was only kidding but see, according to Hogwarts history books I've read, Slytherin house *never* accepted witches or wizards in their house unless that witch or wizard was of pure magical blood..." She explained in a serious tone of voice.

The others in the compartment listened closely as Hermione's tone of voice turned dark and her eyes narrowed slightly.

"I'm thinking it was like a requirement for them or something because the founder of that house only trusted those of pure blood... Snobbish and biased belief really but still... It was like that for a long time at Hogwarts..." Hermione continued.

A long tense silence filled the room before Hermione laughed and shrugged, shaking her head at them.

"I don't believe in such rubbish, really... I mean, I'm pretty sure there were one or two cases that there were exceptions... I mean, you-know-who was a half-blood wasn't he?" She pointed out.

Harry and AJ's eyes widened in surprise while Ron and Seamus stiffened tensely at the mention of you-know-who, both of them shooting a cautious glance at the twins.

"Yeah but he *still* had magical blood in him... Maybe Slytherin house just doesn't accept those who don't have a single drop of magical blood in them." AJ reasoned.

So that's the house Voldemort was in... No matter... Then that's the house I'm going to be in as well... I'll learn whatever he did and more...I'll show him... Harry thought, sneering to himself.

AJ noticed her brother's face and cleared her throat, throwing the three other kids a smile. "So... Uh, Would you happen to know our parent's houses?" She asked, fusing her eyebrows together in question.

"Well, I'm pretty sure James Potter was a Gryffindor because he was on the Quidditch team before as Chaser and I *would* know that, but they never did say much about your mother though..." Ron answered, looking thoughtful.

Hermione nodded in agreement, raising an eyebrow.

What's a chaser? Harry asked silently but before he could ask, Hermione had spoken up again.

"Yeah... I never really saw anything about Lily Potter but I'm thinking she was a Ravenclaw... I hear she was the smartest witch in her year

and Ravenclaw is where the smartest usually go... I'm hoping to get in there, myself since I *have* already memorized all the books this year and have already read some advances ones myself..." She said, grinning.

Harry snorted rudely, smirking while AJ glared, trying to prevent an indignant, intimidated scowl to form on her face.

Looks like AJ has finally found a rival for being the geek of the entire year... Harry thought, still smirking to himself.

"How do you know she wasn't a Gryffindor?" Seamus asked Hermione pointedly, rolling his eyes.

Hermione made a loud tutting noise, shaking her head as though the answer was the most obvious thing in the world.

"Because, silly, the Head boy and the Head Girl were never in the same house! And James and Lily were the head students in their time! You should both be proud Harry, Amanda." Hermione said, smiling.

AJ let out a breath of frustration. "Right! I've had enough of this, would you all just call me AJ, please? I hate being called by my full name!" She snapped, rolling her eyes.

Harry smirked while the others laughed heartily, nodding in agreement.

As the conversation moved on from there, Harry tuned out, leaning his head on his twin's shoulder again in boredom while everyone else began to talk about different things about themselves.

Harry had only paid a little attention when Ron had pulled out a rat from his pocket, making his twin shriek in surprise.

He had called the rat Scabbers but after that Harry had tuned out again, staring out the window and nearly falling asleep as Ron, Seamus and Hermione began to talk about the different sweets the wizarding world has as AJ just half-listened, reading silently from her book.

These three have got to be the most talkative people I have ever met...Harry thought in annoyance, being the type of person who appreciates silence, even among friends, at certain occasions.

He came around again just as Hermione, Ron and Seamus had all asked them if they wanted to buy anything, gesturing to a witch with a trolley of sweets outside their compartment.

Harry and AJ had both declined any sweets, both still full while the other three had bought a whole lot of candies, Ron explaining each and every one to Hermione and Seamus, and even AJ, who seemed mildly interested in the cards found in every Chocolate frog wrapping.

"Here, check this one out." Ron offered, tossing AJ a card which she promptly caught in the air, reading it curiously.

"Albus Dumbledore?" She asked, peering at the surprisingly moving picture of an old looking wizard, her emerald eyes wide with disbelief.

"So *this* is Dumbledore..." Harry said, peering at the card over her shoulder as the man with half-moon glasses and long silver hair, beard and mustache smiled warmly at them.

AJ nodded and turned the card over, reading the information at the back.

ALBUS DUMBLEDORE

Currently headmaster at Hogwarts

Considered by many the greatest wizard of modern times, Dumbledore is particularly famous for his defeat of the dark wizard Grindelwald in 1945, for the discovery of the twelve uses of Dragon's blood and his work on alchemy with his partner, Nicolas Flamel. Professor Dumbledore enjoys chamber music and tenpin bowling.

Turning the card over, the twins' jaw dropped when they noticed that the picture of Dumbledore had disappeared.

"He's... gone??" AJ exclaimed, her eyes as wide as saucers now.

"Ay, well you can't expect him to hang around forever... Hey, I'm surprised at the both of you, don't you two like sweets?" Seamus asked, offering them another chocolate frog.

"Yeah but not too much, thanks anyway." Harry grumbled, turning back to stare outside the window.

Before anyone could say anything else, a boy with a round, chubby face peered in the compartment, looking around them almost sadly.

"Have any of you seen a toad? I've lost mine..." He said glumly, still looking around the compartment.

"Tell you what mate, when we see a big, fat ugly toad, you'll be the first one we inform." Harry said sarcastically, giving the boy a sneer.

The boy didn't seem to notice Harry's haughty tone of voice so he just nodded thankfully, walking out of the compartment again.

Hermione turned to glare at Harry with a disapproving look on her face. "You didn't have to be so rude, Harry! He was just looking for his pet!" She reprimanded, shaking her head.

Harry glared back, raising a single eyebrow in response. "Are you actually *scolding* me?" He snapped.

Hermione turned beet red, shaking her head hastily. "No of course not, I was just—"

"Let me tell you something, missy, *never*, in my entire life, will I ever follow a scolding from someone ever again, not my muggle relatives, not even my sister, and most especially from *you*." Harry said coldly, narrowing his eyes just as Hermione snapped her mouth shut, looking at him with wide eyes.

AJ just hid an amused smile behind her hand as Ron and Seamus gaped at Harry, surprised at the uncharacteristic snobbish tone of voice he used.

"I... Okay, Harry. That's fine..." Hermione muttered sourly under her breath, sighing to herself.

"Well anyway, did you all hear about what happened at Gringotts?" Seamus asked, trying to ease the tension in the room.

AJ looked up immediately from her book, peering at Seamus in sudden interest. "What about it?" She asked, fusing her eyebrows.

"Well, I read that someone was actually crazy enough to try and rob a Gringotts high security vault! An absolute nutter, I tell you!" Ron told them, shaking his head in disbelief.

AJ stared at him, speechless, unknowingly making Ron shift uncomfortably under her gaze.

Harry's head had suddenly snapped back to face them. "What did the thief take?" He asked, his eyes narrowed suspiciously.

Ron shrugged while Seamus snorted, giving him a wry smile.

"Nothing. That's the weird part, who would break in a Gringotts vault and not take anything? Weird... See, everyone usually gets scared whenever stuff like this would happen because they reckon you-know-who might be behind it." He explained, shuddering in fear.

Hermione, who had been listening carefully before, finally spoke up again. "It must have been a very powerful person... No one ever manages to try and rob Gringotts and still gets out alive to escape..." She mused.

Harry met his sister's worried glance, seeing the strange look of fear and suspicion in her eyes as she bit her lip and turned away, nervously turning back to her book.

"What house do you think you'll be in?" Harry asked Ron, looking at him with a cautious glance.

Ron sighed glumly, rolling his eyes.

"Gryffindor... That's where all *five* of my brothers were and my parents as well... I, well, at least, I'm hoping I'll get sorted there but if not, I suppose Ravenclaw wouldn't be so bad... I just hope they don't put me in Slytherin." He said, looking disgusted.

Harry smirked, raising an eyebrow in secret amusement. "Why not?" He asked, trying to prevent the laughter from breaking out of him.

"Well, I hear there wasn't a witch or wizard in Slytherin who wasn't dark... I wouldn't want to be associated with a group like that..." Ron answered, rolling his eyes.

"But you're a pure-blood right? I'll bet you could have a chance to be sorted in Slytherin." AJ pointed out, looking at Ron intently again, an unreadable look in her eye.

"No thanks... I don't think so... Besides, all Slytherins turn out to be such jerks... No way am I going there... They're all power-hungry and arrogant." Ron said, shaking his head firmly.

Harry snorted, pretending to sigh in agreement. "I guess I wouldn't want to be in Slytherin too if they're all *bad, mean* wizards..." He mocked wryly, earning a cough from his twin that sounded suspiciously like a laugh.

Ron and Seamus laughed, not noticing the derisiveness in Harry's tone of voice. "Ay... So Harry, mate, what's your Quidditch team?" Seamus asked, looking at him.

Harry looked back blankly, his face looking emotionless. "None yet... Haven't heard of any yet..." He answered flatly, shrugging.

Ron and Seamus looked at him as though he was mad. "What?! Oh you just wait, it's the best bloody sport yet!" Ron exclaimed, grinning.

"Hmm... Okay..." Harry said, nodding but turning away to watch as Hermione peered at Ron's sleeping rat, raising an eyebrow.

"Doesn't he do anything but sleep?" She asked, poking at it.

Ron's ears turned red but he laughed it off, taking out his wand.

"Not much... I tried to turn him yellow with magic once.. You know, to make him look more interesting but I can't seem to get it right... Here, watch." He said, pointing his wand at the rat.

“Sunshine daisies, butter mellow, turn this stupid fat rat yellow.” He chanted but nothing happened except for Scabbers twitching his nose, turning slightly in his sleep.

Ron sighed in exasperation, shaking his head while AJ and Hermione both looked as though they were holding back laughter, both girls taking their wands out of their pockets.

“Is that a real spell? It isn’t very good though, isn’t it? Hmm... Well, let me try.” Hermione suggested, muttering something under her breath and managing to turn the fat rat yellow instantly as she waved her wand over it.

AJ scowled, rolling her eyes. “Show off...” She muttered under her breath, pouting as Harry gave her an amused smile, sniggering slightly.

Hermione pretended not to hear them both as Ron poked at the yellow rat, amazed at the new color and the skill of the girl in front of him.

“Er, that was wicked but... Er, I don’t really think this was his color after all... Could you change him back now?” He asked, grimacing.

Before Hermione could lift her wand, AJ had easily flicked her own wand over it, instantly changing the rat back to its original color, smiling smugly as she put her wand back inside her pocket.

“I also memorized all the books this year... I’m hoping to be one of the top students this year myself.” AJ said, throwing Hermione a glance as the other girl’s eyes widened in surprise.

“Well, then, I guess we have two geeks to worry about....” Harry muttered under his breath, making both Ron and Seamus laugh and his twin and Hermione to flush in embarrassment.

Before either of the girls could defend themselves, the compartment door slid open again and three boys entered their compartment, looking around in obvious search of someone.

Harry recognized the middle one as the aristocratic silver-blonde boy he had met in Madam Malkin's robe shop but he didn't know the other tough-looking two at both his sides, their bodies so huge that they made the middle boy, who was about the exact height as Harry, look smaller in contrast.

Harry instantly broke out into a friendly lopsided grin of recognition, which the boy returned, pointedly ignoring the others as he stepped into the compartment, looking at both Harry and AJ in interest.

"So it's true then... They're saying all down the train that the Potter twins were in this compartment... It's you, isn't it?" He asked, his silver eyes scanning both their foreheads, his eyes lingering on AJ for a moment.

"Well, you found us..." AJ answered, grinning at him and brushing her bangs back, making sure he saw the scar on her forehead.

"Amazed? I'm surprised you didn't figure it out sooner in the robe shop...How often do you come across fraternal twins?" She pointed out, laughing.

The boy opened a mouth to respond but Harry cut him off, speaking up in agreement.

Harry grinned conceitedly, shrugging. "Ah, well, I guess it slipped both our minds that other day at the robe shop that we were the famous Potter twins." He said, chuckling.

The boy smirked in amusement, chuckling along with him.

"Well, I guess my own ignorance amuses me..." The boy drawled, making AJ stifle her amused smirk behind her hand.

"I wasn't thinking... I apologize..." He said, following Harry's curious gaze at the two tough-looking boys on either side of him, both of them looking like bodyguards.

"Oh, this is Vincent Crabbe and Gregory Goyle." The boy gestured to the two ugly boys behind him carelessly.

"And my name's *Malfoy*, Draco Malfoy." He said, quirking his lips into a sideways grin at them.

Harry's eyes widened in surprise, obviously impressed with the name and the way Draco had introduced himself to him, even if he had met *the Harry Potter*.

*Malfoy...I knew there was something about this guy that demanded respect... So... He's a member of the Malfoy family we were talking about earlier... Well... Seems I just found my new equal...*He thought, allowing himself to grin at the other boy.

Ron, who had been silent the entire time with Seamus and Hermione as the three boys had entered, finally snorted in amusement, covering his mouth to prevent a laugh from escaping.

Why do I get the feeling that wasn't a good move? AJ thought, shaking her head as she watched Draco's eyes flash in anger, briefly reminding her of Harry's own impulsive anger as Draco snapped his head to glare at Ron.

Draco looked directly at him, his gleaming silver eyes narrowing threateningly at the other boy as though he was daring him to do something else.

"Think my name's funny, do you? Don't need to ask yours..." He said, sneering as he eyed him up and down in disdain.

Ron flushed in embarrassment as Draco's sneer widened, his eyebrow arching up scornfully.

"Red hair, freckles, more children than they could afford... Father's told me all about you, *Weasleys...*" Draco said snobbishly, turning back to Harry and AJ with a self confident smile on his face.

"You'll soon find out that some wizarding families are better than others... Being from the well known Potter clan yourself, I am certain we are alike in a lot of ways ... Two sides of the same coin... After all, you wouldn't want to make friends with the wrong sort..." Draco said, throwing another look at the other three stunned students in the room.

"I can help you there..." He finished, holding out a hand once more as he had done in the robe shop to Harry, silver orbs meeting emerald orbs fiercely in challenge once again.

Harry looked calmly back at him, a slow smirk spreading on his handsome face as he haughtily eyed the hand Draco had extended.

He knew very well that if he chose to accept this boy's hand of friendship, it would cause a great change in his future years at Hogwarts. That a big step in his life would occur and would affect his future years to come...

Somehow, he knew... He knew that this was going to be a big turning point in his life... And somehow... He knew... He knew he would *love* it...

*It's now or never...*A voice inside Harry's head said, making him ponder for a moment whether he should choose this hand or the friendship of the still gaping two boys in front of him.

Who am I kidding? He finally concluded, laughing inwardly at himself for thinking such a thing before he turned to meet Draco's challenging gaze again.

"I think I can figure out who the wrong sort are for myself, thanks." He answered, still smirking at the other boy.

Draco's eyes widened in disbelief and panic for a second and just as he was about to react, thinking Harry had declined his friendship, Harry had reached a hand out and clasped his hand, giving it a firm, reassuring shake.

Draco relaxed instantly, shaking the hand back in return as Ron's jaw dropped open in disbelief and absolute shock, Seamus and Hermione still too stunned to say anything.

Harry was still smirking at him, looking as though he was amused at Draco's first reaction.

"Had you scared there for a minute, didn't I?" He kidded, laughing as Draco's eyes narrowed slightly before he gave in and chuckled in

amusement, shaking his head as Crabbe and Goyle sniggered behind him.

"You are most definitely a Potter..." He muttered, still chuckling before he turned to AJ, who had been watching the scene silently as though she was thinking about the whole situation.

Smiling charmingly, he held out a hand to her as well, making AJ narrow her eyes slightly at him in suspicion.

"How about it Amanda? I'd be honored if you would accept my hand of friendship." He said, raising both his eyebrows expectantly at her.

AJ turned to look at her brother, who was looking at her pointedly, obviously telling her that she was to accept whether she wanted to or not.

AJ sighed to herself, shrugging.

Why not? Draco seems sincere enough... I trust my brother's judgment anyway... He seems to know exactly what he's doing... She thought, allowing a smile in return as she took the hand offered to her.

However, instead of shaking it, Draco had turned it over and hand kissed the back of her palm, making Harry's eyes narrow slightly and AJ's cheeks to tinge with pink.

"Pleasure's mine, Amanda...." He murmured, as AJ fought down the blush and smiled back, slowly taking her hand back from his.

"Call me AJ... *Draco*... Hmm... *Draco*... *Dragon* in Latin..." She realized, raising an eyebrow curiously at him.

Draco grinned. "Yeah, that's me... So, what do you say we go to my compartment?" He offered, turning back to Harry.

Harry shrugged and was about to stand up when Ron suddenly spoke up again, this time looking at Harry with disgust on his features.

"So that's it? You're going to go with *him*, Potter? Then you're just as self-centered and diluted as Malfoy is... You know, I assumed that

being Harry Potter, one of the heroes of the wizarding world, you would be different from scum like Malfoy but I guess I was wrong..." Ron said angrily.

Harry just grinned back mockingly, shrugging in a careless manner. "Nope, I'm me..." He said, chuckling.

"Besides, if you think the Potter twins are the noble, selfless and humble heroes we're somehow portrayed to be in the books, you thought wrong. After all, heroes come in all shapes and forms...Not at all like you would expect them to be." Harry said, smirking.

AJ looked at him in surprise, not wanting to believe that those words had just come out of her brother's mouth... That was harsh, even for him....

Sighing, she turned and shook her head, brushing it off... Come to think of it, her brother hadn't been the same ever since that incident with the Dursleys... She knew, sooner or later, she would have to accept this new side of him anyway...

Ron's ears had turned red as Draco smirked and Crabbe and Goyle sniggered, causing Harry's smirk to grow wider.

*Looks like we're going to get along quite well...*He thought, looking back at his newfound comrades.

Ron could believe it... Harry Potter... Harry *bloody* Potter was actually taking sides with Malfoy! He didn't know why but he had had this feeling that he and Harry could have actually become great friends but then Malfoy had to go and mess that up...

He had never thought Potter would be just like Malfoy was.... He had met Malfoy before... Lots of times actually and he knew very well what the Malfoys *real* family history was...

Supporters of you-know-who... Dark wizards...His father had even told him that Lucius Malfoy, Draco's father, was still supporting you-know-who until now... He just couldn't believe that Potter would actually *want* hang out with good-for-nothing jerk like Malfoy...

He would have thought that since he and his sister lived with muggles their whole lives and were the wizarding worlds' heroes, they would have been very different people than the Malfoys but...

Potters right... I just thought wrong. Ron thought in disgust, shaking his head.

"Ay! Harry, mate! They're a bad lot! You shouldn't hang out with them!" Seamus protested but shut up immediately when Malfoy had given him a fierce glare, his eyes flashing.

"So what? Besides, you people bore me... I need a group who knows action..." Potter added, as he and his sister stood up, reaching for their trunks.

Hermione goggled at them.

"Hey, wait a minute, you two are just going to leave and go with *them*? I've heard a lot of bad things about their group... They aren't trustworthy!" She declared but Malfoy just laughed, smirking as he snapped his fingers and almost instantly, Crabbe and Goyle helped the twins with their trunks.

"To put it mildly, we all just don't *click* well together... Our personalities clash too much... But, see you all around." AJ offered, trying to be polite and lessen the insult her brother had caused to the group but Ron had had enough.

Standing up, he shoved Potter in challenge, his eyes flashing in indignant anger.

"I'd be careful if I were you Potter! You want to hang out with a dark, evil crowd, then fine by me! Then you'll meet the same end as your parents did! I try to be your friend but you slap it back at my face! Go on, be a prick and hang out with Malfoy! You're both the same anyway." Ron said, scowling.

AJ sucked in her breath at the mention of their parents, surprised at the anger and spitefulness she suddenly felt at the insult. Too angry to say anything else, AJ turned and glared at him darkly, her hands clenching into tight fists.

Potter didn't move for a minute, his eyes narrowing slowly as his back was still turned to Ron, his form tensing.

Looking up, he met Malfoy's eyes, which were giving him a look, obviously urging him on.

Nodding, he turned around and grabbed a fistful of Ron's robes, raising him up slightly as his eyes flashed like lightning with anger.

"*Never insult our parents in front of me...*" He hissed darkly before dropping him abruptly and turning away, dragging his sister with him roughly as he did.

This time, Seamus stood up just as Ron picked himself up from the ground, Hermione giving the boys apprehensive looks, nearly biting her nails in panic.

"Well then I guess we found your weakness, eh Potter?" Seamus said, a hint of uncertainty in his voice.

"Oh, you're going to fight us aren't you?" Malfoy asked, sneering.

"Malfoy, just take your newfound followers and leave right now." Ron said calmly, taking a deep breath of anger to calm himself down.

"Well we don't feel like leaving, do we boys? Hey Goyle, why don't you help yourself to some candies over there?" Malfoy said, gesturing to the chocolate frogs.

Goyle reached forward for one, sniggering stupidly, making Ron leap forward but even before Ron had touched him, Goyle had let out a loud wail.

AJ peered closely and saw that Scabbers was hanging off Goyle finger, his teeth sunk into his knuckle as Goyle frantically swung Scabbers around and around, howling with pain.

Potter, Malfoy and Crabbe all backed away towards the door as Goyle finally flung Scabbers at the window, making AJ shriek in disgust as she ducked down to avoid being hit by the rat, immediately running behind her brother.

Without another word, the group had left immediately, leaving Ron, Seamus and Hermione in silence before Hermione finally stood up, gingerly picking Scabbers up by his tail.

"I can't believe it... Harry and AJ seemed like a nice pair... I can't believe they would go off with a crowd like that..." She mused, shaking her head.

"I think Scabbers is knocked out...." Seamus pointed out, trying to change the subject as he poked at the rat.

Ron couldn't help laughing lightly, shaking his head. "Nah... He just fell back asleep..." He said, taking the rat and putting it back in his pocket, sighing as he collapsed back on the seat.

"Have you met Malfoy before?" Seamus asked Ron, looking at him curiously.

Ron glared back darkly, rolling his eyes.

"Yeah... Loads of times before... I've even heard a lot about his family... I heard they were the first to come to our side after you-know-who disappeared saying they've been bewitched... Yeah, right, Malfoy's father is one bloody hell of a dark wizard himself." He said bitterly.

"Well, whatever, I say we put on our robes now. We'll be arriving soon anyway, so I'll leave you two alone for now so you could change... And Ron, you've got dirt on your nose by the way, did you know? Just there..." She pointed out before shrugging and walking out, leaving a red Ron glaring after her.

"You play Quidditch at all, Harry?" Draco asked as soon as they were settled in their new compartment, Draco leaning back in his seat and propping his feet up on the other seat across from him, folding his hands behind his head.

Turning his head towards Draco, Harry rolled his eyes. "I already told you, I don't... Quit rubbing it in, Malfoy." He snapped irritably.

AJ, who sat right across from Draco with his feet right beside her as she read the same book quietly, raised an eyebrow in irritation at the blonde boy in front of her.

"Do you *mind*? The seat is for *sitting*, not for putting your feet up on it." She said irritably, narrowing her eyes at him.

Draco immediately put his feet down, smirking as he raised both his hands up in defense, chuckling.

"Merlin, are girls always this demanding?" He taunted, laughing when AJ snarled at him in response.

Crabbe and Goyle, who were both next to Draco stuffing themselves with pastries, sniggered stupidly while Harry smirked from where he was right beside AJ, staring out the window once again.

AJ rolled her eyes, flipping her hair over her shoulder in annoyance.

"Boys are so annoying..." She muttered under her breath, sighing in mock exasperation as she turned back to her book.

Draco didn't say anything as he just stared at her intently, an unreadable sparkle in his eye as he allowed a grin to himself, his pale cheeks tingeing slightly with pink for a half-second before he looked away abruptly.

Turning towards his new newly found comrade, Draco smirked arrogantly at Harry, crossing his arms over his chest smugly.

"Anyway, as I said, I'll teach you all about Quidditch, Potter! Not to sound too cliché, but I like ya. You've got guts, I like that. Plus, for some strange reason, I see the same cunningness, the same confidence and abilities in you as I have in me. Plus, you don't play around or don't take stuff lying down... Very impressive." Draco said, nodding.

Harry raised an eyebrow, unimpressed.

"Thank you but why should I care what you think, Malfoy?" Was the flat, sarcastic reply, making Draco laugh out loud again.

"I knew you would say that... Well... Just to tell you Harry... I think we could accomplish a lot of things together... You and me, we're very similar people, see... And I not only offer you my friendship but also my loyalty. You and I could become a powerful duo." He explained carefully.

Harry couldn't help but smirk back and nod in interest. "I see...."

"And to tell you the truth, I'm not the type of guy who just offers his friendship to anyone he meets... I'm very picky about my choice of friends, 'nothing but the best' I always say... Hardly *no one* ever meets my standards of a good comrade but I think you may just have surpassed my expectations and more." Draco continued.

"Well thank you, Malfoy, that's very touching." Harry mocked, pretending to wipe a tear but Draco rolled his eyes and waved it off, laughing.

"Anyway, Potter, it's *Draco*, okay? I have enough respect for you to allow you *and* your sister to be among the very few who get to call me by my first name." Draco said smugly, smiling in self-satisfaction.

Harry nodded in acknowledgement, giving the other boy a lopsided grin. "Fine then, Draco... It's *Harry*. I take it you're the type of guy I can learn to trust and respect as well... We could learn a lot from each other." He agreed, holding out a hand.

Draco eyed it curiously for a moment, an ironic smile on his face, before he took it and gave it a firm shake, nodding.

Harry rolled his eyes, yanking his hand back and laughing at Draco in amusement. "No, Draco! Don't you know how to do a handshake?" He asked, shaking his head.

Draco looked confused and arched an eyebrow in question. "Handshake? I just did you moron..." He asked flatly, sounding uninterested.

Harry and AJ both looked at each other and grinned while Harry turned to face Draco, holding out a hand again.

"I meant a special handshake, you git. Well, okay, here, I'll teach you one." Harry said, grinning.

AJ tuned out, reading her book as the two boys spent the rest of the trip amusing themselves by trying to think of a their own special handshake, occasionally snapping sarcastic comments every once in a while that would make AJ smile in spite of herself.

Frankly, she was quite surprised that her brother had accepted this new boy's friendship quickly... Usually, Harry was the cold, antisocial twin, always glaring darkly at everyone else in the corner, refusing to talk but instead, he had found himself a friend even before she had... It was quite amusing...

She just hoped Draco would become a good influence on her brother though... Or... *Isn't it the other way around?* She amended, hiding a smile.

She was snapped out of her thoughts when Harry and Draco both let out a laugh and performed their new completed handshake in front of her, making her giggle in spite of herself, shaking her head.

AJ put her book down and gave them both a smirk, shaking her head.

"Sorry to interrupt this little comedy show but I think we should all get changed soon, I think we're nearly there." She said, briefly checking her watch for a minute before standing up and heading towards her trunk.

"Sisters..." Harry muttered, making Draco laugh and shrug at him, winking playfully at AJ.

"At least your sister is pretty..." He teased, making AJ growl and hurl her book at him, which he promptly caught in the air and handed back, still chuckling.

AJ grumbled darkly as she left the compartment so the boys could change, waiting impatiently outside before Harry let her in again, this time, kicking the other boys out as his sister changed inside.

When they had all changed properly into their Hogwarts robes, the train had slowed down and everyone in the train had rushed out into the dark, cold night onto the dark platform.

"Firs' years over here! Firs' years! Hey Harry, AJ! You two alright?" A familiar voice asked above them, making the twins look up at Hagrid's smiling face, the lamp he was carrying just above their heads.

Harry and AJ both nodded as Hagrid spotted more first year students and called them over, beckoning for all of them to join their group.

AJ was about to nudge Harry about something when a whole horde of older students suddenly brushed past them, nearly causing her to lose her balance and fall off the platform if the boy behind her hadn't caught her hand to steady her.

AJ whirled around saw that the boy had the same raven hair she did but his were spiked on top of his head and among the black strands, there were several blonde strands mixed along with it, making it look like he had gotten blonde highlights.

His gray eyes were currently looking at her in mild amusement, a charming smile on his face.

"Thanks." AJ said, giving him a smile, not being able to prevent her curiosity from showing in her eyes.

The boy smiled back, shrugging.

"No problem. Just be more careful next time, duchess." He said, winking before they both turned back to Hagrid, who lead their whole group to a steep narrow path, eventually bringing them around the edge of a great black lake.

"Ooh..." Most of them chorused, peering at the lake in amazement as Hagrid led them towards a group of little boats sitting in the water near the shore.

"Four to a boat! Go on then!" Hagrid urged, helping the students pile into boats one by one.

AJ followed her brother into a boat with Draco, the boy who had helped her from falling earlier joining them as Crabbe and Goyle got into the next boat with two blonde girls AJ didn't know.

As soon as everyone had a boat, Hagrid began leading them all towards the castle, everyone silent as they stared up at Hogwarts in awe, eyes wide and jaws hanging open.

Their boat gave a sudden lurch, causing AJ to gasp in surprise as she hovered dangerously near the edge of the boat but once again, the spiky-haired boy reached out a hand and steadied her, chuckling.

"I told you to be careful, duchess..." He kidded, steadyng her once again as AJ yanked her arm free, turning to face him.

"Stop calling me that... And that's the second time you saved me, thank you..." She marveled, laughing as she shook her head at herself, causing the boy to laugh as well.

"Well, could you at least give me your name?" AJ asked, peering at him curiously, ignoring Harry and Draco, who were both laughing in front of them, hurling a toad towards the round-faced boy that had came into their compartment earlier.

The boy smiled, shrugging as he charmingly held out a hand, nodding.
"I'm Blaise Zabini. Pleasure—"

"AJ Potter. Pleasure is *mine*." She said, grinning as she shook his hand, raising an eyebrow in amusement as Blaise did the familiar flicking of eyes to her scar.

"Are you really?" He asked, looking surprised.

AJ nodded, smirking. "No, I'm just pretending I am." She answered sarcastically.

Blaise turned to look back at Harry, who was at the front of their boat, he and Draco both smirking at another student, obviously something in mind.

"Then he must be—"

"Harry Potter? Yeah, that's him, my twin brother... He and Draco over there have seem to be bonding pretty well and now, they're acting like the best of friends even though they've only met once before today." AJ said, rolling her eyes.

Blaise laughed, shaking his head. "Well, that's how they say 'birds of the same feather flock together'... Anyway, are you excited about Hogwarts?" He asked, gesturing to the castle.

AJ whistled as they neared it, shaking her head. "No.. To tell you the truth, I'm dead nervous... Kind of worried what house I'll be in..." She admitted, sighing as they all got out of the boat and began climbing a flight of stone steps.

Blaise smirked, waving it off.

"Well, *I'm* almost certain I'll get in either Slytherin or Ravenclaw... But I'm betting Slytherin though... Most of my family members were... Although some were Ravenclaws and as much as I hate to admit it, about one or two Gryffindors too... At least we were all purebloods." He said, grinning.

AJ rolled her eyes at his arrogant tone of voice, shaking her head.

"Good for you..." She mumbled as Hagrid knocked three times on the castle door in front of them with his huge fist, the sound echoing through the night.

The door swung open almost immediately, revealing a tall, black-haired witch in emerald-green robes, looking at all of them with a stern face.

Harry nudged Draco sharply, leaning over to him.

"*Menopausal Hag.*" He whispered in his ear, making sure only Draco could hear him, causing Draco to muffle his sudden laughter with a loud cough, making the stern witch eye him sharply for a moment, which Draco returned with an innocent smile as Harry fought to keep a straight face.

Ron and Seamus looked pointedly at them, scowling in disapproval and dislike as Harry and Draco both sneered back unknowingly at the same time, Crabbe and Goyle flexing their muscles threateningly beside them warningly.

"The firs' years, Prof. McGonagall." Hagrid said, nodding at her.

"Thank you Hagrid, I will take it from here." She answered before pulling the door open widely, allowing them all to see the huge entrance hall inside where the stone walls were lit with torches, the ceiling was too high up to make out and a beautiful marble staircase sat facing them.

They heard a hundred voices from a door to the right, indicating that the rest of the school must already be there but Prof. McGonagall led them to a small chamber where they all squeezed in, looking around curiously.

"Welcome to Hogwarts."

A/N: Heehee! *Cliffhanger!! Mwahahaha!* wink! Well, not really, you all know *technically* what's going to happen next but the sorting hat ceremony will have to wait until the next chapter! Hope you all liked that crappy chapter, I am seriously squeezing the imagination out of my brain too much now that I am developing these constant headaches... sigh anyway, hoped you liked it! **PLEASE REVIEW!! MWAH! Luvyah!**

Chapter 6- New House, New Family

AJ gaped open mouthed at the stern-looking woman, Blaise laughing lightly at her expression.

"The start of term banquet will be beginning shortly but not before we have the sorting ceremony to sort you into the proper houses which you belong. Mind you, the sorting hat always knows best so it is wise not to question its decision." Prof. McGonagall said sternly, not noticing Harry mimicking her every word under his breath so that only Draco could hear.

Draco was obviously trying hard to keep a straight face as this while Crabbe and Goyle both sniggered under their breaths behind them, their shoulders shaking slightly.

"Your house will be your family here at Hogwarts. You will have classes with your house, eat with them at mealtimes and spend your free time at your house common room. Now the four houses are Gryffindor, Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff and Slytherin. Each house has its own history and has produced outstanding witches and wizards." Prof. McGonagall continued, her mouth set into a straight line.

Harry was sniggering now as he boldly raised a hand, fighting back a smile as he noticed Draco's flushed face next to him.

"Uh, sorry Professor, I have a question. I didn't get the names... Was it Gryffindorks, Ravenbras, Hufflefluffs and Slytherin?" He asked, an innocent smile on his face as Draco let out another snort of laughter, turning away hastily as his shoulders shook in mirth.

(A/N: Thanks to PrincessAj for those names! giggle I love it! You're a genius AJ!)

AJ's jaw dropped open instantly while everyone else just gasped at her twin brother's unexpected and surprising daring in shock and alarm as Prof. McGonagall's eyes seemed to narrow very slowly, taking a step towards the raven-haired boy with a threatening, stern glare.

"I see you have turned out exactly the way we had expected you to be, Mr. Potter... However, you had *better* not use that sort of tone with me... If you and Mr. Malfoy over here find yourselves amusing and brave... You thought wrong." She started, glaring at them.

"I do *not* tolerate mockery, Mr. Potter... If you and Mr. Malfoy may somehow find this funny, you both might be spending your first night in detention and losing points for your house." Prof. McGonagall said very firmly, giving the two boys a glare.

Harry and Draco both looked at each other in surprise at already being recognized, their eyes widening slightly as their laughter almost immediately died down, both of them watching as McGonagall approached them.

"Each name of each house was taken after the name of the most respected wizards in the Wizarding world, each has its own noble history so I do not expect a child your age to respect it but I am *not* amused by your antics at all..." McGonagall scolded seriously, narrowing her eyes at the two boys.

The other students remained quiet as Harry and Draco both scowled at the floor, nodding sullenly at the woman in front of them.

"One more wise crack like that from the two of you and we will already be heading for the headmaster's office. You wouldn't want to start your school year already getting yourselves into trouble now would you?" She continued, giving them a pointed look.

"No Professor." Came the flat, sullen answer from the boys, both of them refusing to look up in complete embarrassment.

Merlin's beard... These two are no doubt going to be worse than the Weasley twins have ever been.. I can tell even now... A new pair of rebels to keep a close watch after. Prof. McGonagall thought as she narrowed her eyes at the two boys, shaking her head.

"Being a first year with that kind of behavior is not something I am looking forward to, Mr. Potter and Mr. Malfoy... You had better change... I'll be keeping a close eye on you two from now on... And

not another word, Mr. Potter.” McGonagall snapped, glaring at them again.

Harry bit his lip to keep from scowling up at the stern woman, rolling his eyes to himself in both annoyance and amusement, trying not to laugh as Draco seemed to do the same, both of them not noticing that the other students were looking at them in shock and disbelief, their jaws hanging open.

“As I was saying... In each house, your triumphs will either earn you house points... Any rule breaking and you will lose points and by the end of the year, the house with the most points will be house cup.” Prof. McGonagall explained carefully, her eyes still firmly set on Harry.

“Now all of you prepare yourselves, the sorting ceremony will be beginning in a few minutes in the Great Hall. I shall return when we are ready for you... *All* of you...” Prof. McGonagall’s voice trailed off as she looked at Harry and Draco sharply.

“Behave yourselves... Especially you two.” McGonagall said with obvious disapproval and distrust shown on her features for the two boys, who smiled up at her innocently, nodding their heads in agreement.

Still frowning, she turned away and left the chamber, shaking her head at the two boys still smiling innocently at her as she walked away.

“So it’s Harry... I suppose the girl is—Well...change has already begun... The Potter twins have come to Hogwarts at last... What a year...” Prof. McGonagall muttered under her breath as she walked out of the chamber, leaving the students in a stunned silence.

As soon as she was gone, AJ turned to her brother with a snarl on her features, punching his arm in annoyance and irritation.

“Hey!” He snapped in irritation, glaring at his sister in question. AJ was just about to respond when they were both interrupted by the sudden screaming of people behind them, making them both jump in surprise.

Harry whirled around to see twenty ghosts streaming through the back wall, the ones in front seemingly locked in an argument as they approached them.

AJ's eyes widened in fear as she instantly backed away, clutching at her twin's hand almost reflexively, her jaw dropping to the floor.

"New students! New students once again!" One ghost whose name Harry had heard was Fat Friar, coming up to the gaping first years with a wide, friendly smile.

"Hope to see you in Hufflepuff! It was *my* house, you know!" The ghost told them all cheerfully, not noticing the sudden look of disdain that had suddenly formed on Blaise's face.

"Well, see you all around!" The ghost said right before he followed the other ghosts through the opposite wall they had come from, leaving the students in stunned silence.

The tense silence seemed to last for a long period of time before the pale boy with the round face suddenly jumped forward, his eyes wide in alarm and panic.

"Trevor!"

The sound was enough for the students to blink and jolt back to reality, just as AJ turned to face her twin brother again, ghosts immediately forgotten as she gave him a reprimanding glare.

"Harry, are you crazy?! Did you see the look on the Professor's face?! That wasn't funny at all, that was plain stupid and idiotic! What were you trying to prove anyway?!" She hissed just as everyone else began to talk excitedly again, the room filling with murmurs.

Harry just burst out into laughter, causing Draco to join in slightly afterwards, shaking his head at his newfound comrade beside him.

"Figures... Even after seeing ghosts, you would still be more worried about scolding a lame teacher." Harry replied derisively, snorting in laughter again.

"I swear, Potter... You are one prick with a lot of guts and stupidity..." Draco marveled, laughing harder when Harry smirked, chuckling in agreement.

AJ growled at Draco, raising a hand and punching him on the arm harder, causing Draco to wince in pain and Harry to laugh harder, drawing some of the students' attention to the trio as they were easily the loudest.

"Hey! What did you do *that* for?! I didn't do anything, it was your brother there!" Draco snapped, scowling at the girl as made to punch him again, which he easily avoided, ducking hastily.

Harry sniggered as AJ seemed to snarl in frustration, glaring daggers at Draco as the blonde could only grin back tauntingly, raising a playful eyebrow.

"You probably influenced Harry in the first place! You two are so insensitive and annoying!" She snapped irritably at him, scowling as Draco scowled back in annoyance as well, growling.

"Well stay out of it! You're just a girl anyway so don't butt in our business! Besides, do you *always* want to follow what grown-ups tell you to do?" Draco retorted wryly, smirking at her.

AJ's eyes narrowed very slowly and very dangerously, the friendship that had formed between them temporarily forgotten as she glared at the boy in front of her, shaking in fury.

Harry held back a smile as he watched the amusing exchange. He knew his twin sister well enough to know *never* to make those 'you're just a girl' comments because it severely pissed her off, being the feminist she is.

He could already count off how many boys AJ had punched right in the jaw or kicked right in between the legs for making comments like that in the past, showing them exactly what *just a girl* could do.

He himself had that mistake on certain occasions and he had always regretted it dearly, vowing never to make those sexist comments around his sister again for his own dear sake.

Now, watching as AJ glared daggers at Draco and as Draco just grinned right back, a teasing hint in his eyes, he couldn't help but take a step back, ready to watch the fireworks begin with an amused smile on his face.

Some of the other first year students had backed away from their part of the room, looking at them in curiosity as Crabbe and Goyle took a step back from Draco at seeing Harry's warning look, leaving Draco and AJ in the middle of the room.

Blaise, who was right beside Harry, mirrored the amused, anticipating smile on his face as he watched the glaring contest between the two first year students, trying hard not to burst out laughing.

Harry watched as the first years he had met earlier, Ron, Seamus and Hermione watched the two with apprehensive looks on their faces, looking around to make sure that any teacher wasn't nearby.

"Alright Mr. Tough guy... Let me show you exactly *what* just a girl can do..." AJ threatened very slowly, her lips quirking into a smirk as she gingerly raised the sleeves of her robes up on her arm, her eyes glinting maliciously.

Harry's face broke out into a grin as he watched her, nudging Crabbe beside him excitedly.

"Watch this Vince... *This* is how you can tell we're related.." Harry said, smirking sadistically as Crabbe sniggered in response, watching the scene.

"Oh yeah? What's that? Kiss and look pretty? What, you're going to kiss me, AJ?" Draco mocked again, smirking as AJ flushed dark red in anger before letting out a growl, finally lunging at him, sending them both crashing to the floor.

"Hey—" Draco never got to finish his protest as AJ's fist collided with his cheek, causing him to wince in pain momentarily before he blinked and struggled immediately, trying to switch their positions.

AJ let out another growl of frustration as Draco reversed them so that he was on top of her, scowling angrily as he clutched his cheek in pain with one hand and easily holding AJ down with the other.

"Never knew your sister was a cat with claws, Harry..." Draco grumbled spitefully as he cringed in pain again, trying desperately to hold back the wildly struggling girl beneath him.

Harry's eyes widened in shock and anger, not liking the fact that his sister was being treated that way and he was just about to do something when McGonagall came back into the room, her eyes widening as she saw the two students on the floor.

"Mr. Malfoy! Ms. Potter! Just what do you think you are doing?!" She shrieked in anger, striding over to them immediately and pulling Draco off AJ, who scowled as she got up, blushing with humiliation and anger.

Draco scowled right back at her in response, both of them dusting their robes, secretly sticking their tongues out at each other or glaring daggers whenever they had the chance.

Prof. McGonagall did not look amused, glaring back and forth between the two students just as the other first years began to assemble into a straight line, giving the two amused, interested looks.

"I swear, never have I expected such a troublesome batch of first years! One more stunt like that and I shall have you all scrubbing the dungeons on your first night here!" Prof. McGonagall exploded angrily, causing Draco to smirk to himself and AJ to bow her head in shame and embarrassment.

Harry watched as Prof. McGonagall tried to calm herself down, leaving the room once again for a moment while the students all glared angrily at him, AJ and Draco, anger and blame clear on their faces.

"Nice going you three... If you're all planning on spending the night scrubbing dungeons, don't include the rest of us with you." Ron snapped angrily at them, shaking his head in disgust.

Draco sneered at him, narrowing his silver eyes dangerously. “Stay out of this, Weasley.” He said easily before turning to Harry, who had walked up to them, shaking his head.

“Jeez... I know girls like me and all but you didn’t have to jump me... We’re too young, AJ.” Draco commented in a whisper to keep the silence, biting back a laugh as AJ’s eyes flashed again, her form tensing.

“I don’t know how they can.. You’re not all that charming you know.. Girls wouldn’t be in their right mind to like *you*.” She hissed back, scowling.

“For your information, Ms. Potter, a lot of girls say I’m handsome and—”

“Yeah, well I pity them.” AJ interrupted flatly, rolling her eyes.

“Well I sure ain’t gonna like *you* that’s for sure so you don’t have to worry about anything! You’re a bit too aggressive for me!” He snapped back wryly, smirking.

AJ glared at him, her emerald eyes flashing like lightning bolts. “Oh yeah?! You want to say that to my face, Malfoy?!” She taunted in challenge, raising her chin.

“Sorry but I’d rather not...” Draco said easily, smiling again as his silver eyes sparkled with surprisingly warm humor and laughter at the girl’s growing annoyance.

Harry looked extremely pissed off now as he glared between them back and forth, his eyes raging in anger, annoyance and warning all at the same time.

“Would you both shut the *bloody hell* up?! Draco, if we’re going to be friends, you and my sister had better find some way to get along because I can *not* handle the school year with you two pissing me off like this!” Harry snapped angrily, causing several students to gasp at his choice of words.

AJ flushed in embarrassment as Draco chuckled, gingerly dusting his robes and clutching his bruised cheek in pain again, raising a casual eyebrow.

“Sure, Harry... If you tell your twin over there not to jump me anymore.” He replied teasingly again, causing AJ to lunge dangerously at him again but Harry held her back, now laughing with mirth and amusement.

Draco gave AJ one last charming smile before she finally let out a sigh of exasperation, rolling her eyes childishly as she flipped her hair over her shoulder and stalked over to the end of the line where Blaise was, rolling her eyes in annoyance.

Harry watched his sister for a moment as she crossed her arms over her chest, scowling darkly at the floor as she began muttering under her breath, obviously extremely irritated as she began talking to herself to calm her anger down.

Harry chuckled, shaking his head as his twin right before Prof. McGonagall walked back in, her face set back into a calm, controlled expression as she nodded at them, inspecting the line for a moment.

“Follow me.” She said tightly, turning around and beginning to lead the long line of first years to the Great hall, most of them gazing around the surroundings in awe and excitement.

Harry, who was behind Draco, poked him from behind, leaning over to whisper something quietly so that Prof. McGonagall wouldn’t hear.

“What method do they use for the sorting?” He asked in a hushed whisper, suddenly aware that his muscles were all tense with nervousness at what house he was going to be sorted in.

Draco smirked, obviously not at all intimidated or nervous about what’s to come during the ceremony itself.

“You’ll find out.” He answered calmly, shrugging just as they entered a pair of double doors leading to the Great Hall, exposing an extremely huge room unlike Harry had ever seen before with floating

candles and four large and long tables, extending from the very front of the room where another long table with teachers was situated.

Prof. McGonagall quietly led the fidgeting first years down the long aisle towards the front of the room, situating the students in such a way that they were all facing the older students in a line, their backs turned towards the teacher's table.

Harry calmly watched as most of the stares of the older students seemed to linger on him and AJ, their eyes going wide and suddenly whispering to the person next to them as they recognized who they were.

Rolling his eyes at this, he turned to face the ceiling, his eyes widening slightly in awe when he saw the beautiful swirl of the night sky and the stars above him, making it seem as though the room had no ceiling at all.

"It's enchanted to look like the sky outside. I've read about it in *Hogwarts, A History*." Hermione whispered to him when she saw his dazed look, causing him to look at her in surprise for a moment before he covered his surprise with a smirk, raising an eyebrow at her.

"I care." He whispered back flatly, rolling his eyes just as Prof. McGonagall set a single stool in front of them where she carefully placed a black, pointed wizard's hat which was so dirty and frayed that it made Draco stiffen in mild disdain beside him.

What are we supposed to do?! Pull a bloody bunny rabbit out of that blasted hat?! Harry thought in annoyance as he saw the hat, running a hand through his hair impatiently.

Hermione looked at him carefully, not reacting for a moment before she spoke up, her eyes unreadable.

"You know... I never thought that Harry Potter could be such a rude jerk. You seemed nice enough when we met in the zoo." She said simply, keeping her eyes trained on him.

"Well now you know." He answered back snobbishly as he turned his gaze away from her, not at all liking the aura he somehow sensed

around this girl or the strange sense of a weird, disturbing emotion he sensed emanating from her.

Hermione opened her mouth to respond but before she had the chance, the hat on the stool twitched for a second, drawing the young girl's attention to it in shock before the hat burst into a song:

"Oh you may not think I'm pretty but don't judge on what you see,

I'll eat myself If you can find a smarter hat than me.

You can keep your bowlers black, your top hats sleek and tall,

For I'm the Hogwarts sorting hat and I can cap them all.

There's nothing hidden in your head the sorting hat can't see,

So try me on and I will tell you where you ought to be.

*You may belong in **Gryffindor** where dwell the **brave at heart**,*

*Their **daring nerve** and **chivalry** set Gryffindors apart;*

*You might belong in **Hufflepuff** where they are **just and loyal**,*

*Those patient **Hufflepuffs** are **true** and unafraid of toil;*

*Or yet in wise old **Ravenclaw** if you've a ready mind,*

*Where those of **wit** and **learning** will always find their kind;*

*Or perhaps in **Slytherin** you'll make your **real friends**,*

*Those **cunning** folk use any means to **achieve their ends**.*

So put me on! Don't be afraid! And don't get in a flap!

You're in safe hands (though I have none) for I'm a thinking cap!"

"So we just have to try on the hat! I'll kill Fred! He was on about having to wrestle a troll or something equally frightening!" Ron raged

in an angry whisper to Seamus, who snorted in laughter, shaking his head.

"I hope I get Ravenclaw... I hear that's where they usually get the head students." Hermione whispered loud enough for AJ to hear, who rolled her eyes in response, scowling.

"I certainly hope she does get Ravenclaw." Ron muttered to Seamus, who nudged him lightly in response, shaking his head.

"So we have to try on that bloody hat?" Harry hissed at Draco just as the whole Hall burst into applause, the sorting hat bowing down to each of the four respective tables before it became still again, causing the whole hall to fall into another state of silence.

Draco gave him a reassuring smirk, raising an eyebrow at his new friend's obvious state of nervousness.

"Relax, Harry... We're a sure welcome into Slytherin house. Trust me, I can tell." He said, clapping Harry on the back before he turned to look at Prof. McGonagall in front of them, who was holding a long roll of parchment in her hands.

"When I call your name, you will put the sorting hat on your head so you can sorted into your respective house. *Abbott, Hannah!*" She called out, her eyes searching the line for the girl.

"Where else do you place a hat besides your head?!" Harry whispered sarcastically to Draco, who bit down a laugh and nudged him sharply, both of them sniggering under their breath.

Ron, who had heard him, turned and glared at them both, narrowing his eyes in irritation at the two boys.

"Well for stupid pricks like *you* two, you'd have to find another spot to put the hat on, seeing is that your heads are way too big for it." He commented, making Seamus and Hermione hide snorts of laughter beside him as Harry and Draco's pale cheeks both tinged in humiliation.

They watched silently as Hannah, a petite, cute girl, bounded forward, high blonde pigtails bouncing cheerfully, causing Blaise, who was whispering something sarcastic to AJ, snort in disgust and annoyance, his features creased in disdain.

They all watched as Hannah put the hat over her pigtalled head and sat down on the stool, waiting patiently for a few moments until the hat shouted out her house to the entire hall.

“HUFFLEPUFF!”

The table on the right cheered and clapped loudly as Hannah bounced over to them, passing by Blaise who secretly stuck out his foot in her path, tripping the girl immediately and almost causing her to fall down to the floor if her friend beside Blaise hadn't caught her by the arm to support her.

“Loser...” He hissed at her just as the girl snapped her head up to glare at him for a minute before she flicked her pigtails over her shoulder, rolling her eyes as she made her way to her respective table, muttering something under her breath.

Harry looked at Blaise in surprise and approval for a minute, grinning at the boy before he turned back to face the next student to be sorted, Susan Bones, who the girl who had helped Hannah earlier, as Prof. McGonagall had called her up next.

Giving Blaise a hateful glare for what he had done to her friend, she roughly shoved past him and plopped down on the stool just as Hannah had earlier, waiting as she wore the hat on her head.

“That was horrible...” AJ hissed angrily to Blaise, who just chuckled, raising his hands in an ‘I surrender’ pose in front of his face.

“HUFFLEPUFF!”

Blaise snorted again and stuck his foot out to trip Susan as well but Susan gave him a knowing glare, deliberately stepping over his foot and walking proudly to her house table amidst the cheers and claps once again.

AJ giggled at Blaise's disappointed look, shaking her head in amusement as Prof. McGonagall read out the next student.

"Boot, Terry!" She called out as a boy stepped out of the line and walked over to the stool, putting the hat over his head and within seconds, had been sorted into "**RAVENCLAW!**", the said table cheering for him in response.

Harry tuned out in boredom just as "*Mandy Brocklehurst*" was called, the girl bumping into him from behind almost flirtatiously, giving him a smile before she put the hat over her head, waiting.

Draco nudged him, giving him a knowing smile. "I think she likes you, Harry." He teased, sniggering when Harry glared at him in response, rolling his eyes.

"RAVENCLAW!"

"Oh, stuff it, Draco." Harry snapped amidst the loud cheers of the Ravenclaw table, rolling his eyes as they both watched "*Brown, Lavender*" become the first Gryffindor, causing the Gryffindor table on the far left to burst into cheers and catcalls.

"Now *that* is a loser." Draco commented to Harry as Lavender made her way towards the Gryffindor table, a proud and happy smile on her face.

"Nice stems though." Harry and Draco both said unintentionally at the same time, causing them to look at each other in surprise before they both smirked, shaking their heads.

Prof. McGonagall called the next student once again, "*Bulstrode, Millicent*", drawing their attention back to the hat.

A rather large, boyish-looking girl easily the same bulk as Crabbe and Goyle stepped forward, accidentally bumping into AJ, nearly causing the much smaller girl to crash to the floor if Blaise hadn't reached forward and grabbed her arm.

"Third times the charm, duchess. You owe me three times." He kidded, causing AJ to sputter in indignation as she yanked her arm away from him.

"Argh! That's the *third* time, Zabini! Quit saving me already, you've proved your point! I don't want to owe you any more favors and quit calling me duchess!" She snapped impatiently, her cheeks flushing in embarrassment as Blaise laughed at her, grinning.

"SLYTHERIN!"

This time, the Slytherin table burst out into a respectful applause of acknowledgement and welcome as no cheers or exclamations were heard at all from the quiet, urbane table, causing several of the unsorted first years to shiver in fear and intimidation.

In contrast however, Harry couldn't help but smirk in admiration and approbation at the aura he saw in the Slytherin table, his eyes glinting as felt a strong drawing sense of calm, welcome and acceptance radiating from the cold Slytherin crowd.

He could tell that they were a crowd which demanded respect and loyalty... Demanded power and determination...Camaraderie and support...True allegiance and stability and probably the thing he craved most... A well established association he wanted.. *needed* to become part of..

He remembered the words he had found in one of the books AJ had bought when they were at Diagon Alley about Slytherin in which he had taken a great liking to...The words, although long, were scarily still clear in his head as he thought of them as though he had memorized it by heart, remembering the impact it had brought upon him.

"Slytherin house isn't really as bad as everyone believes it to be. It does not produce evil wizards as everyone assumes because **you-know-who** himself was one. It is the **wizard**, not the house, who determines his side whether good or evil.

*Those wizards who are sorted into Slytherin are sorted there because they **need** Slytherin house. They need the support and the respect*

that only Slytherins offer to one another to survive. Those who are not in Slytherin house will never understand this because they do not need Slytherin house and are usually independent on their own, unafraid of their weaknesses unlike Slytherins, who run away from their weaknesses, refusing to face and conquer them.

They are never brave in heart as Gryffindors are, in matters of emotions. They have always been known as strong outside but weak at heart, usually having a hostility, a weakness that they choose to hide behind their house, usually caused by an empty void in their lives that they desperately need to fill, taking comfort in their housemates' allegiances and the power they crave to have.

They seek to find their true identities, feeling lost and angered without it, willing to destroy anyone and anything to keep them from doing just that. Because of this, they have been known not to know or understand the feelings taught in other houses, making it difficult for them to accept what is different to their own kind.”

“Harry!” Draco hissed in annoyance, snapping Harry out of his long, deep state of trance, finally noticing Seamus Finnegan proudly walking to Gryffindor table the same time Hermione was called, the excited girl heading excitedly to the stool, crashing into Harry in the process.

Harry blinked, confused and dazed for a minute before he turned and steadied Hermione in annoyance for a minute, meeting her apologetic eyes with amused, spiteful ones of his own, raising an eyebrow at her.

“Watch where you’re going, Granger.” He drawled out slowly, quirking his lips into a smirk as Hermione seemed to redden, much to his amusement and curiosity before she turned abruptly and bounded to the stool, jamming the hat on her head.

“GRYFFINDOR!”

The Gryffindor table broke out into applause and cheers once again as Hermione joined them with a slightly disappointed look on her face, plopping herself down next to Seamus as Ron groaned from where he was still among the other first years.

“Longbottom, Neville!” Prof. McGonagall called again, causing Neville, the round-faced boy who kept losing his toad, to step forward, Draco sneering spitefully at him as he passed by.

“*GRYFFINDOR!*”

Harry and Draco both rudely burst out laughing at the same time when Neville had rushed forward with the hat still on his head, causing a mild uproar of laughter within the hall as he hurriedly gave it back to *“MacDougal, Morag.”*, before joining the other Gryffindors.

“Malfoy, Draco!” Prof. McGonagall called, her eyes setting on Draco with a sharp, disapproving glare.

Draco smirked, clapping Harry on the back before he sauntered confidently to the stool, gingerly lifting the hat on himself to be sorted but before the hat had even touched his head, it had shouted his house straight away.

“*SLYTHERIN!*”

Harry grinned and clapped along with the Slytherins as Draco casually walked over to join Crabbe and Goyle at the end of the table, looking extremely pleased with himself as he did just as the Green and Silver Slytherin crest magically appeared in the front of his robes.

Harry yawned in boredom as he waited for the rest of the students to be sorted, only aware enough to take notice of the names and the faces of the students that were being sorted.

He watched as *“Moon”, “Nott”* were sorted, and eventually *“Parkinson, Pansy.”*, a pretty, smirking girl behind him, who gave him a bright smile which Harry returned easily before she was sorted as another **“*SLYTHERIN!*”**.

Mmm... I'll have to introduce myself to her. Harry thought as he watched Pansy walk over to the Slytherin table, taking her seat next to Millicent Bulstrode, a self-satisfied smile on her face.

If I get sorted in Slytherin of course... He added, now feeling his palms start to sweat in nervousness and anticipation as the list neared him and his sister, causing both Potter twins to fidget around uncomfortably, afraid of being sorted and the very idea of being separated from the other.

AJ nervously exchanged positions with several other students to get to him, instantly clutching his hand tightly in nervousness as Harry squeezed hers back, grateful for the comforting gesture.

They both watched nervously as another pair of twins, the identical *Parvati and Padma Patil*, were sorted into **GRYFFINDOR** and **RAVENCLAW** respectively, followed by “*Perks, Sally-Anne*”, “*Perrine, Lila*” until at last—

“*Potter, Amanda!*”

The whole hall suddenly burst into excited whispers and murmurs as AJ gently squeezed Harry’s hand again before stepped forward nervously, her face ashen as everyone stared at her in awe and shock, their eyes searching for the scar on her forehead, looking around to spot Harry as well.

“*Potter, did she say?!*”

“*The Potter twins?! That must mean Harry is here as well! Is that him over there?!*”

“My, they certainly *do* look alike... Wonder where they’ll be sorted...”

“*Gryffindor. Definitely Gryffindor, their father was in Gryffindor!*”

“Aw!! They look absolutely adorable and innocent! How cute!”

Harry snorted derisively at the words ‘*adorable*’ and ‘*innocent*’, his features creasing into an irritated, mocking snarl to show them exactly that he was anything *but* adorable and innocent, humiliated by the comments.

AJ shakily placed the sorting hat over her head, trying in vain to ignore the students who were all craning to get a close look at her

and her brother just before she was staring at the darkness of the hat, feeling rather foolish as she waited.

“Ah... Ms. Potter... I have long been waiting to sort ‘you’ my dear...”
The hat’s voice seemed to echo inside her head, causing her eyes to wide in shock and surprise.

“Yes... I can see right inside your head Ms. Potter... You and your brother are destined for great, marvelous things... Though whether it be for good or for evil would be up to you to decide...” The hat continued, its voice lingering in her ear as everyone else in the hall stared at her expectantly.

What do you mean by that? AJ asked the hat, fusing her eyebrows together in confusion at the soft chuckle that seemed to rumble inside the hat.

“The prophecy has begun Ms. Potter... That is all I am willing to tell you... I have known even before you were born, which house you are to be sorted... It is in your blood... And it is in your destiny... Should you choose to accept it... You are a very powerful witch, Ms. Potter... Just like your parents... Just like your brother... I see great things in your future...” The hat whispered softly.

AJ’s eyes widened as she tried to understand what the hat was trying to tell her, feeling her head start to hurt as she scrunched her face in concentration.

Accept what?? What prophecy? What greatness?! She asked impatiently, as the hat refused to answer her again, enveloping her in silence for a brief second before it answered again.

“Hmm... But though I know which house you belong in... Where would I sort you?? You have inherited more from your father, AJ... brave at heart..., noble..., gallant... though hiding your true self behind a weak, frail mask... At the moment, your weaknesses overpower your true abilities and power, Ms. Potter... You have yet to mature and find out who you really are... You have yet to find your true self...”

Please let me be in the same house Harry will be... I can't survive if you separate us...I need to be with my brother...I don't know how I can handle being alone and by myself. AJ pleaded silently in her mind.

"Ah... I see up until now, you choose to follow the path your brother takes instead of finally walking your own...Remember AJ, you and Harry are very much alike yet very much different... Sooner or later, you cannot follow your brother anymore and must walk on your own path..." The hat explained slowly, causing AJ to roll her eyes, not really paying attention.

Yeah, yeah... Whatever... Now just sort me already will you?! She snapped at the hat, finally growing impatient at waiting for her house, the hat chuckling again in response.

"Very well... 'For now', I will put you with your brother...Perhaps you indeed cannot develop without him so until you have matured and grown independent, you will be together but when the proper time comes... I shall be talking to you again Ms. Potter...Very soon...And during that time, I will be sorting you to the house where you really belong. Remember my words, Ms. Potter...We 'shall' meet again, until then... You're in—"

“SLYTHERIN!”The hat finally shouted to the whole Great Hall, causing most of the students to gasp in surprise and shock, their eyes widening in disbelief as the Slytherin table broke out into an enthusiastic, welcoming applause, eagerly willing to accept their new housemate easily.

Most of the students in the other houses were all staring, jaws agape as AJ calmly walked over to the Slytherin table, giving Harry a grin which he returned easily, nodding proudly at her as he saw once again, the Slytherin crest magically marking itself on her robes.

Even most of the teachers at the staff table were all staring and gaping in shock and surprise, not at all expecting what had just happened.

They had expected the Potter twins to either be sorted into Gryffindor or Ravenclaw but never had they expected Slytherin... Thinking that

since you-know-who himself had been there, they would have strayed away from that particular house.

But as the teachers turned to look at Dumbledore, they were surprised to see the headmaster calm and unsurprised almost as if he had been expecting what had happened, though rather pale and distant as it did.

AJ sat down across from Draco right next to Pansy, Lila and Millicent, who gave her wide smiles and pats of welcome as the other, older Slytherins smiled at her as well, some of the older boys even winking playfully which caused the younger girl to blush instantly.

Look...Whatever that kooky hat said...It was probably just pissing me off, I obviously belong here anyway. I shouldn't let a stupid hat bother me, I'm a Slytherin now. She thought stubbornly, blushing again as she felt the stares of the older Slytherin students on her.

Harry watched his twin sister with wide eyes, finally hearing the pounding in his heart as he briefly worried about what house he was going to be sorted in... Just the thought of the humiliation of becoming a *Hufflepuff* or *Gryffindor* and being separated from his sister was enough to make him want to melt onto the floor.

“*Potter, Harry!*” McGonagall finally said, this time drawing the whole hall’s attention to him as he stepped forward, the calm, collected smirk on his face betraying the actual panic and nervousness that was pounding inside him.

The whole hall went tensely silent again in a dead frightening stupor as everyone watched Harry gingerly lift the hat and place it very slowly on his head, ignoring the anticipating stares of everyone else in the hall as he waited properly to be sorted.

“...Mr. Potter...How very surprising that you are nervous about your house...Surely by now, you know where you belong since I see you have already released your true self...Unlike your sister earlier, you do not live a lie... ‘You are indeed what you are to be’...” The hat drawled in a deathly creepy whisper, causing Harry’s eyes to widen at the familiar line he remembered he had heard from that Boa Constrictor in Brazil.

Where did you hear that?! Harry demanded furiously, his eyes narrowing as he tensed in question, wanting to know the answer.

The hat chuckled in response, sounding amused at Harry's confusion. *"I see you have already met one of your... 'allies'... Much more will come, Harry... You will soon discover who you really are and who you are to become... You have already started that particular change that night in the cabin didn't you?"* It asked, causing Harry to start in alarm again.

How did you—

"I can see everything in your head, Harry... Do not be afraid... What I see here is that you have already accepted who you are and are already on the right path of your destiny... But you must teach your sister to do the same... You hide only your weaknesses whilst your sister hides her strengths... You Harry, will become one of the most powerful wizards in the near future..." The hat told him silently, its words soft but clearly understood.

"You are very much like your mother, Harry... It is in your blood where you really belong... You are strong Harry... Very strong in every aspect... Mind, body, power... Except for your emotions... You are not afraid of others but you are afraid of yourself so you choose to bring your own wrath on others rather than face it yourself... You still have a lot to know about yourself, Harry... Never confuse the person you are destined to be with the person you are." The hat explained, irritating Harry as he fused his eyebrows in confusion.

Would you speak English?! Harry thought in irritation, his features forming into a scowl as he fidgeted impatiently for his house.

"I have no problem sorting you into the house you belong in.. The house you crave for and the house that would help you on your way to greatness... You have much to learn, Mr. Potter... The time of the fulfillment of the prophecy shall be at hand during your stay... Make wise with your new house's influence... You will soon develop your true magical abilities and bring out the wizard I see in you... Do you know which house that is, Mr. Potter?" The hat asked suddenly.

“Slytherin?” Harry asked, a slightly confident tone in his voice as his choice of house.

“Very good Mr. Potter... You choose to accept and walk the path designed for you with pride and confidence... You are most definitely a—”

“SLYTHERIN!”

Harry let out a grin as the hat shouted the last word to the entire hall, causing the entire Slytherin table to erupt in a proud applause of acknowledgement once again, AJ standing up in welcome with a similar grin on her face, causing the rest of the house to do the same as the other tables remained deathly silent.

Harry had a confident yet calm look on his face as he strode over to his new house table, nodding as the older students patted him on the back as he passed, some of the older girls bending down to kiss him on the cheek in welcome while others, offered a handshake.

“Welcome to our family, Potter.” A tall Slytherin boy with a gleaming badge on his chest said as Harry passed him, smirking at him in recognition which Harry returned easily, finally noticing that he was getting the loudest applause, the Slytherins all looking at him in approval and pride.

“Glad to be here...” He drawled back, giving them all a smile as he looked down to see his new Slytherin crest on his robes, the Slytherin serpent on the crest seeming to glow eerily for a split second before it stopped, causing Harry’s eyes to narrow in suspicion.

“We got both Potter twins...” Another Slytherin older student mentioned loud enough for the other tables to hear, causing some of them to roll their eyes in annoyance and scorn.

Most of the other students were still deathly quiet, an eerie silence filling the hall as though they were suddenly afraid of what had happened, their eyes wide and unmoving, when they had watched Harry’s frighteningly slow, silent and relaxed movements to the table, sitting down beside Draco, who clapped him on the back in greeting.

Looking up, he saw an old wizard he recognized as Dumbledore, looking at him with serious, cautious look in his eyes, almost as if he was a waiting bomb waiting to explode any second.

Harry let his eyes wander at the on the High table as the Hall resumed back to the sorting ceremony, his gaze moving from Dumbledore's uneasy one to Hagrid, who was sitting at the far end of the table.

Hagrid gave him a shaky smile, his beady eyes slightly wide and looking as though he was trying hard to hide his shock as he waved at them, turning away.

Beside him, Harry caught sight of Prof. Quirrell, the man he and AJ had seen at the Leaky Cauldron, who was trembling slightly but clapping along with the others as the ceremony continued, sporting a purple turban around his head which caused Harry to smirk in amusement.

He watched silently with his new housemates as “*Thomas, Dean*” became another *GRYFFINDOR* and “*Turpin, Lisa*” become a *RAVENCLAW*, whom Harry and Draco had both looked at intently as she passed their table to get to hers, causing the girl to giggle to herself.

Draco just sneered mockingly as *Ron Weasley* was finally called, sitting expectantly on the stool with the hat on his head for a short moment until the hat finally shouted, “*GRYFFINDOR!*”, causing the Gryffindors to burst out in applause again, cheering for him.

“Figures...” Draco muttered under his breath as Ron grinned and joined the other Gryffindors, his brothers all cheering loudly for him and clapping him on the back as he sat down beside Seamus and Hermione.

After several more minutes, *Blaise Zabini* finally joined them at the Slytherin table but just as he was about to sit down, AJ promptly stuck her foot out, causing him to curse out and stumble immediately and the Slytherin table to burst into gales laughter.

AJ giggled as Blaise glared at her angrily, his gray eyes flashing in humiliation and fury at her for a minute, which AJ returned with a sheepish smile, shrugging at him in response.

“Sorry... I just couldn’t resist...” She said cheerfully, grinning.

Blaise narrowed his eyes at her for a minute before the corner of his lips quirked into a smile, sending both him and AJ into fresh peals of laughter as he sat down beside her, Harry and Draco both flashing him a smirk.

Just as Harry was about to say something, Prof. Dumbledore finally stood up in front, giving them all a welcoming smile, lingering on Harry and AJ for a minute before he began his speech.

“Welcome! Welcome to yet another year at Hogwarts! Before we begin the banquet, I have a few words to say, and they are— *Nitwit!* *Blubber!* *Oddment!* And *Tweak!* Thank you!” He announced cheerfully before sitting back down, everyone else clapping and cheering as he did.

Harry raised an eyebrow, his face in a stunned grimace at the man’s display of odd behavior as he clapped along absently with the others, not knowing how to react to what had just happened.

“Um... Are you *sure* he’s one of the most powerful wizards?? The guy sounds like a complete crackpot to me...” Harry marveled at Draco, who in turn laughed, shaking his head.

“Well, father always told me that Dumbledore was one of the most crazed lunatics he had ever met so I never really had much respect for the man, anyway... But they say you-know-who is afraid of him.” He answered snobbishly, just as the plates in front of them began to fill up with food instantly, causing Harry’s jaw to drop open.

Draco noticed his wide eyes and grinned, his eyes looking as shocked and impressed as Harry’s were as they both stared at the wide variety of food in front of them, their mouths watering instantly.

No words were spoken as all students on the table began to help themselves to the dishes in front of them, the hall suddenly being

engulfed in loud chattering and murmurs as they students all began to eat excitedly.

Looking up from his plate for a minute, Harry managed to lock gazes with a black-haired teacher, who gave him a small smirk, nodding briefly before raising his goblet slightly in acknowledgement, which Harry weakly returned, too stunned to say anything.

“Draco...” He asked, nudging the blonde boy beside him persistently, which Draco returned with by stomping on Harry’s foot on the table, too busy with eating his dinner to care about his friend’s anxiety.

“Damn, Malfoy!” Harry snapped irritably, stomping Draco’s foot back in return, causing Draco to choke on his pumpkin juice as Harry smirked at him in amusement, holding back sniggers.

After he had cleared his throat of the pumpkin juice, Draco turned and glared at Harry, his silver eyes flashing in annoyance as the girls they had recognized as Pansy and Lila both giggled at them coyly, watching them both with batting eyelashes.

Harry smiled back innocently, shrugging before he rolled his eyes and laughed, turning his attention back to the High table as he saw the black-haired professor talk to Prof. Quirrell with serious expressions on their faces.

“I’m just curious, who’s that teacher talking to Dumbledore?” He asked, nodding towards the teacher again, his eyebrows fused in question.

Draco rolled his eyes and followed Harry’s eyes to the table before he broke out into a grin, shrugging before he turned back to his mash potatoes, taking a whole spoonful before answering.

“Erh, shrat’s purfeshor Shnape... Heesh rur head of housh yur know.” Draco murmured, accidentally spraying AJ across from him with bits of mash potato, who wrinkled her nose in disgust at him.

“You know, Draco... There’s actually a reason why people say *Don’t talk while your mouth is full..*” She said sarcastically, gingerly wiping her face with a napkin as Draco flushed crimson at the comment.

Pansy and Lila burst into giggles at this while Draco just sneered at AJ in response, raising an eyebrow in annoyance and irritation.

"You were right, Harry, your sister *is* a man-hater... I mean, she seemed nice at first but... Merlin, what a python! I tell you, she can bite like a snake!" He said, smirking when AJ narrowed her eyes at him, causing Harry to laugh out loud.

"Why you little—"

Harry cut his twin off immediately with a single glare, emeralds flashing at similar emeralds, causing her to snap her jaw shut and glare back before turning away, rolling her eyes at them both.

Draco chuckled in amusement at them before he turned to Harry again, grinning at him nonchalantly.

"Anyway, rumor has it that Snape *favors* us Slytherins and doesn't bother with all that equal, unbiased treatment to other houses rubbish...Should be kinda cool if he favors *us* wouldn't it?" He commented, turning back to his dinner.

Harry could only nod back as he turned to the two giggling girls across from them, raising an eyebrow in response before breaking out into a charming but slightly hesitant smile, this being his first time to gather enough confidence to approach a girl first.

"Er... Hi..." He managed to say, fusing his eyebrows in uncertainty as one of the girls smiled back flirtatiously in return, batting her eyelashes at him again as a light blush rose into her cheeks.

"Hi..." She answered back hesitantly as Draco looked up to see Harry grinning at the girl, his emerald eyes sparkling in something he recognized as keen interest.

Sniggering, Draco shook his head at him in mock disapproval, smirking when Harry snapped his head back and glared at him in response, raising his eyebrows in irritation. "What?!"

"Tut-tut, Harry... That's not how talking to a delightfully *beautiful* girl is done...Such beauty deserves to be treated with respect and

admiration, as a Malfoy, I have always been taught to understand this." He said snobbishly as he flashed both girls a debonair smile.

Still smiling, he held out a hand, which one of the girls promptly slipped her hand in as Draco bent down and kissed it charmingly, his eyes confidently focused on hers.

"Call me Draco... You are?" He asked, still smiling as Harry watched the scene with a smirk on his face.

"I-I'm Pansy Parkinson and t-this is my friend, Lila Perrine..." The girl stammered, staring at both boys as Draco's gaze shifted to Lila, who gave him a smile, tucking a strand of her blonde hair behind her ear as Draco kissed her hand as well.

"Charmed...This is—"

"Harry Potter!" Both girls exclaimed excitedly, interrupting Draco, whose jaw dropped open in shock and disbelief as the girls' attention easily shifted to Harry, who flashed Draco a smug smile in response.

Grumbling to himself, he grumpily turned back to his food as Pansy and Lila both gushed over Harry, who in turn, took after Draco's example and talked to them with a smile on his face, ignoring the purely disgusted look on AJ's face.

As they both burst out into high-pitched, shrill giggles, AJ winced, her ears stinging in pain at the sharp tones of their voices before she rolled her eyes, shaking her head in annoyance.

"Boys..." She grumbled under her breath, sighing heavily to herself.

"That all seems to look very good..." The Gryffindor ghost commented glumly as Hermione helped herself to another serving of chicken, causing her to look at in surprise and question as he did.

"Don't you?—"

"I haven't eaten for a long time since I don't need to really but one does tend to miss it sometimes." He answered, interrupting her as

she and Ron exchanged glances before shrugging, turning back to their meal.

“Anyway, forgive me, I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington, the ghost of Gryffindor tower. I’m—”

“I know who you are! You’re Nearly Headless Nick! My brothers have told me all about you!” Ron exclaimed excitedly, causing the ghost to scowl slightly.

“I would prefer *Sir Nicholas*, if you don’t mind.” He said stiffly as Hermione and Seamus both inspected him carefully, eyebrows fused in curiosity.

“Nearly headless? How can you be *nearly headless*, as they say?” Hermione asked, frowning.

Nearly Headless Nick grinned in response. “Like this..” He responded lightly as he tugged on his left ear, causing his whole head to fall onto his shoulders held only by a small amount of flesh which had acted like a hinge.

Hermione, Ron and Seamus’ jaws all dropped open as they paled in shock and horror before the ghost chuckled, flipping his head back into place before giving them an encouraging grin again.

“So! New Gryffindors! Are you finally all going to help our house win the house cup this year? Mind you, Slytherin has had the cup for six years in a row now that the Slytherin ghost, the bloody Baron, has become an unbearable prick!” Nearly Headless Nick said, gesturing towards the Slytherin table.

They turned to see the Bloody Baron, a horrible-looking ghost with a lifeless eyes and a gaunt face with silver blood on his robes sitting next to Malfoy, who didn’t look too pleased at this and was moving away towards Potter, who shoved him in response.

“How did he ever get covered in blood?” Seamus asked curiously as he helped himself to some more treacle tarts, looking at Nearly Headless Nick in question.

"I never asked him..." He replied easily, shrugging in response.

Hermione let out an involuntary shudder as she briefly met Harry Potter's eyes from across the room, both of them locking gazes for a split second before he broke away, turning back to talk to the pretty blonde girls in front of him, a confident look on his face.

"My dad's a muggle and my mum's a witch but she never told him until they got married... What a nasty shock for him." Seamus told everyone, drawing Hermione's attention back to their conversation as everyone laughed in response.

"What about you, Neville?" Ron asked curiously, chewing noisily on a large piece of steak as he talked.

Neville Longbottom, a round-faced, slightly pudgy boy, blushed shyly at being addressed before he shrugged and grinned, looking at all of them hesitantly.

"Well.. My grandmother's a witch and she brought me up... My relatives were all trying to get me to show the slightest trace of magical powers my whole childhood but nothing ever happened much until I was about eight when my uncle accidentally dropped me from a window. I don't know how but I bounced and landed in the road. They were all so happy that I was magical that they bought me my toad." He explained.

However, Hermione wasn't listening as she saw Potter suddenly clutch his forehead for a split second, his twin sister reflecting his actions a couple of seconds later as Malfoy looked at both of them in question, his eyes wide.

Harry shook his head hastily, waving it off before returning back to his food, him and AJ exchanging glances for a split second before they both shrugged, resuming their usual stupor.

Hermione was just about to mention it to Ron and Seamus when Dumbledore finally stood up again, calling everyone's attention to him as the whole hall quieted down for him to speak.

"Before we head on back to our respective dormitories, I would like to make some announcements to all of you. First years.." Dumbledore's eyes twinkled mischievously as he caught sight of Harry and Draco at the Slytherin table.

No doubt Mr. Potter and Mr. Malfoy will be quite a handful this year... With what Minerva told me, they'd make the Weasley twins run for their reputation...He thought jovially before he continued, smiling.

"Should not that *all* students are not allowed in the Forbidden forest... Our caretaker, Mr. Filch, also tells me to remind you all that magic is not allowed in the corridors. Quidditch trials will be held on the second week of the term so if any of you are interested in playing for your house, contact Madam Hooch... And finally, may I inform you all that the third-floor corridors on the right-hand-side is off-limits to those who do not wish to die a painful death." He finished, smiling.

"Is he actually serious?" Hermione asked Ron's older prefect brother, Percy Weasley, incredulously as she stared at Dumbledore with wide eyes.

"I suppose so... He usually gives reason why students should avoid most places but oh well..." His voice trailed off as he shrugged, his attention focused on Dumbledore.

Hermione tuned out as Dumbledore led everyone into singing the Hogwarts school song, everyone singing at their own selected tune until only the Weasley twins were left, singing the song with like a funeral death march.

"Well then, off you go now! First years, follow your house prefects! Off you trot!" Dumbledore said cheerfully as everyone got up and began following their prefects into their house dormitories, the Gryffindors first years all trailing after Percy as they left the hall.

Just as she was about to exit the hall, she bumped into someone, causing her to gasp in surprise and snap her head to meet the sneering face of AJ Potter, who was heading off with the other Slytherin first years, her new house crest gleaming proudly on her robes.

“Sweet dreams Granger...” She said sweetly, smiling as Hermione nodded and turned to go but before she could, the girl had reached out and grasped her arm tightly again, causing her to face her in question.

“One more thing... Good luck in class tomorrow... You’re going to need it. As far as I’m concerned, I’ve always come out on top when it comes to academics... You’ll need to work really hard to keep up with me.” She said in mock sweetness again.

Hermione slowly narrowed her eyes at the challenge and threat in the girl’s voice, not at all expecting her to come into her Slytherin qualities so fast and not at all expecting her to treat her as a competition.

“Don’t worry... I will... Thanks for the advice...” She answered back calmly before she turned and walked back over to her housemates, feeling glaring eyes on her back as she left the hall with the other Gryffindors.

What a year...

AJ yawned loudly as their house prefect, a fifth year boy named Marcus Flint, led them through the long passageways and corridors towards their dormitories in two straight, organized and silent lines, briefly lecturing them about the responsibilities they now had as Slytherins and the proper behavior they should have at all times.

“We Slytherins are to act refined, dignified and sophisticated individuals at all times... So there will absolutely be *no* foolish mishaps and embarrassing situations... Remember, now that you bear that crest on the front of your robes,” Marcus said, gesturing to the house crest they all wore.

“You carry your house name wherever you go so any mistake you make, *Slytherin* makes... Any stupidity will be reflected upon the *entire* house and in Slytherin, we have a strong rule of unity... So any sin of one is the sin of all... Therefore, we must all pay for that sin...” Marcus continued as they rounded the corner, the corridors and the atmosphere getting darker and colder by the minute.

"In Slytherin, it is all about house pride, honor and loyalty and allegiance... The other houses believe us to be the most conceited, if I must admit... But that is because we are to be *proud* of who and where we belong... We are Slytherins and we shall carry that name and *power* with respect, dignity and *pride*. Is that understood?" He asked sternly as all the first years nodded silently.

"Good.. You're learning already... Silence, obedience and refined behavior are the true marks of a Slytherin. Very well then, I see we will have no problems with your batch... Moving on, as some of you may already know, our head of house is Prof. Severus Snape, who will also be our potions professor in class... You will all treat him with respect and assume to the proper behavior I have taught you when in his presence." He continued, finally stopping in front of thick, dungeon wall of stone, his face only illuminated by the eerie glow of the torches in the corridor.

"He will not hesitate to punish even those of his house when he finds your behavior disgraceful and disappointing. He is our mentor and our keeper, yet is also the one who will show us the proper discipline and obedience that the other houses do not usually possess. You all have much to learn from him." He finished, giving them all a sneer.

"Now then, the password for this year is *Serpent's Blood*. I will not repeat it so you had all remember it well..." Marcus said, the wall behind him sliding open immediately at the said password to reveal a warm, elegant and lavishly styled Common room in a green and silver theme, a fire in an elaborately-carved mantelpiece casting a faint glow of light around the room.

High-backed, plush armchairs were distributed around the room as greenish lanterns hung in mid-air, the room, although slightly cold and unwelcoming as it might seem with its rough walls and dark surroundings, brought a smile to Harry's face.

This looks much more of a home than the Dursley's house had ever been... He thought as he glanced around the room silently, AJ right beside him, shivering.

"It's a bit cold and dark isn't it?" She asked lightly, pulling her robes tighter around herself as Marcus sent her a smirk in response.

"Of course it is... You'll learn to get used to it eventually... It's your new home... Welcome... To the Slytherin common room, mind you, only *Slytherins* are allowed in so you can forget about inviting friends from *other* houses in here...If you *have* friends in other houses that is." He added, sneering.

*Home...*The word echoed through Harry's head, bringing a frighteningly pleased smile onto his features which AJ failed to notice.

"Now... Boys' dormitories are to the door on the left... Girls, to the right... Just so all of you know, we Slytherins are not at all strict about some of you sneaking into the wrong side of the dorms, if you know what I mean..." Marcus said, winking at them knowingly.

The girls all blushed as most of the boys sniggered loudly right before Marcus turned and headed over to the boys' dorms, his robes swishing behind him dramatically.

"Best you learn that robe swish too..." He said jokingly, giving them a wink as they laughed lightly in response.

"*Your* dorms are on the very bottom floor... As you move onto higher years, so will your rooms magically move up to higher floors. The prefects of head students are on the highest floor, in case you're curious... Anyway, good night to you all, see you in the morning." He said over his shoulder before he entered through the boys' dorms.

"Well.. Good night Drakkie! Night Harrykins!" Pansy finally purred to them before yawning and heading up her dorm sleepily.

Harry sniggered at Draco, who glared at him in response. "Drakkie?" Harry asked mockingly, a sneer on his face.

Draco sneered back easily, raising an eyebrow in amusement at his friend. "Harrykins?" He retorted making Blaise, who was behind Harry, laugh loudly.

Harry's sneer instantly formed into a scowl of humiliation as Lila and Millicent and surprisingly, AJ, all giggled.

"Night too guys! See you tomorrow!" Lila said, following after Pansy with Millicent slinking after her, muttering a 'good night' under her breath which was barely understandable.

AJ yawned as well before turning to smile at her brother, her eyes looking dazed and sleepy.

"I don't know why but sleeping in a separate bed and room for first time seems kind of weird and unwelcoming to me." She admitted, sighing as Harry gave her a smile and enveloped her in a warm, comforting hug.

"Me too... We always shared the same bed since we were children...Would you like to sleep with me tonight? I'm sure no one would mind, we are twins anyway." He offered, giving his sister a smile.

AJ shook her head firmly, giving him a grateful smile in return.

"No, that's alright Harry. It's about time I learned to sleep alone. I think we're both old enough to handle being alone now." She said.

Harry fused his eyebrows, narrowing his eyes at her in disbelief and uncertainty. He knew for a fact that his sister still had occasional nightmares and fears in the night, he didn't feel good about not being with her when she experienced them again.

"Are you sure? You might have nightmares again...You sure you can handle being all by yourself?" He asked gently with a tone of suspicion in his voice.

AJ nodded, rolling her eyes at his suspicious tone but flashing him a grateful smile.

"I'll be fine, jerk-face, would you stop worrying about me? I'm not *that* helpless you know, I'm old enough to take care of myself by now and besides, you're only *five minutes* older you prick. Will you be okay?" She asked, lightly punching him on the shoulder playfully.

Harry rolled his eyes but nodded, shaking his head at her.

"Okay. Well.. Have a good night's sleep then, I'll be just in the next dormitory if you need me." Harry said softly.

AJ gave him a reassuring smile before she nodded and gave him a peck on the cheek, hugging him tightly.

"Sweet dreams, jerk-face." She kidded before nodding stiffly to Draco in farewell and heading up the girls' dorms, punching Blaise lightly as she passed him.

Blaise grinned teasingly at Draco. "You jealous of Harry, Draco? Would ickle Drakkie like a kissy-wissy from AJ too?" He teased in a baby voice.

Draco glared as Harry, Blaise, Crabbe and Goyle all laughed loudly at the comment, causing Draco to scowl in anger and absolute disgust at the idea.

"Are you kidding me?! That brat?! I do *not* like AJ! She's like ticking bomb waiting to blow up! We don't even get along, she's so bloody annoying, such a know-it-all and goes out of her way to embarrass me!" He grumbled, walking up to his dorm with a scowl.

Harry shook his head, still laughing at Draco's loud muttering all the way up to their dorms, Crabbe and Goyle soon following right behind him.

"Well, I won't deny that... My sister can be *extremely* annoying when she wants to be... I don't think she and Draco will ever get along...Not that I mind anyway...Besides, it's amusing to see them argue all the time." He said in amusement.

Blaise shrugged carelessly for a minute before both boys headed on up to the dorms, more than willing to finally spend their first night in their new dormitories as newly-chosen Slytherin first years.

A/N: So... What do you all think? I thought I'd provide some additional information about Slytherins in this chapter to try to explain why Slytherins act the way they do... Also I hope I provided some of you with some clues about Harry and AJ here.. wink And can you all tell by now by the way Harry and Draco are acting that they're about

to become the popular Slytherin duo? Hehe... Anyway, hope you all enjoyed it, sorry if it took longer than usual since I wanted to update my GoF fic first... I'll be updating it soon btw so keep a look-out! So, before I end, ***PLEASE REVIEW!! wink Luvyah all!***

Chapter 7- Start of a New Year

Harry broke out into a panicked run as through a dark, unfamiliar corridor, searching around frantically for a trace of people he knew or of anything at all to explain where he was.

Around him, Harry's eyes widened in absolute fear as the broken, battered and lifeless bodies of all the Hogwarts students surrounded him, each one strewn around messily throughout the corridors, not a trace of life anywhere...

Harry whirled around, trembling as he watched, one by one, all the bodies of the students tremble violently, each corpse rising up from the floor, trapping him in the long, narrow corridor as they all started closing in on him, one by one.

"No!! Get away from me, let me go! Stay back all of you!" Harry screamed desperately as they all circled around him, their faces gaunt and lifeless, eyes cold and unforgiving, each one reaching out their icy hands to grasp around his neck.

Harry gasped as one boy about his age managed to touch him, causing him to pull away in absolute fear as he noticed that the boy's hands were smeared in blood and had gotten it on his shirt, causing him to look down at himself in horror.

"You... Harry Potter... You did this... You... 'Hero' of the Wizarding world... Traitor! Traitor!" A girl hissed at him hatefully, her eyes blank and haunting as the circle of corpses around him seemed to grow smaller and small against him, trapping him right in the middle of the dark passageway that seemed to be empty of any other signs of life.

"No, you're wrong! I don't know what you're talking about! Let go of me!" Harry protested wildly, pulling away from the girl and spinning around wildly to look for a way out of the circle of dead bodies surrounding him but there was no way... They had him trapped... And there was no one there to help him...

"Harry Potter... You don't deserve to be recognized..." Another boy hissed at him just as Harry let out a scream again, tripping over his own long robes and falling roughly to the floor.

Harry scrambled onto a half-sitting position as he began trembling in fear, looking up with wide, shaky green eyes as only the haunting eyes of the lifeless, pale bodies of the students seemed to stare into him, penetrating right into his soul.

Harry clenched his hands into fists slowly, causing him to start in alarm when he finally noticed that his palms were wet, but he doubted it was sweat so he looked down but the sight that greeted him was almost more than he could bear...

'Blood... I've got blood on my hands...' He thought, raising both his hands up to his face and inspecting the unmistakable, dark red color of blood on his pale, clammy, shaky hands, allowing him to notice that he was suddenly completely drenched in blood, some of it on his robes and some on his shirt.

"NO!" Harry yelled out loud, his voice cracking as he shot up and pushed through the closing circle just as the students had reached out their lifeless hands towards him, causing the wizards to stumble back onto the floor while Harry ran as fast as he could down the corridor, shutting his eyes tight and not wanting to look back just as tears of fear and panic threatened to escape him.

His dull, heavy footsteps seemed to echo through the long, narrow corridor, leading him around through a dark, complicated twist of passageways until he reached some sort of chamber where he saw oddly familiar looking wizards and witches gathered in front of a large, stone statue of a Wizard's face.

All around the chamber, Harry seemed to feel a strange feeling of familiarity with the different wizards and witches scattered there, each one seeming to duel with the other, locked in a match with their wands or dead on the floor, blood spilling out from their body.

Harry ran right to the very front of the chamber to where the wizards and witches were in front of the face statue, his young, vivid emerald eyes looking up at the much older looking students, his eyes widening when he saw who they were.

Harry looked around wildly and saw Prof. Dumbledore sprawled on the ground, weakly looking up at another wizard who seemed to be

pointing his wand down at the older man with an evil, heartless smile on his face.

“Prof. Dumbledore!” Harry yelled at him but he was surprised when no sound came out of his mouth, the other people in the chamber not even glancing once at his direction as they seemed to be focused on the wizard in front of them in both fear and horror.

Harry followed their gaze and his jaw dropped open, his eyes widening in disbelief as he saw his much older self looking down at Dumbledore in absolute hatred, an evil and maniacal look in his eyes as his whole seventeen-year-old form seemed to be glowing in bright green.

Harry watched, unmoving as his seventeen-year-old self’s own emerald eyes seemed to glow fiercely for a minute, a sadistic gleam in them as the face behind him seemed to move, causing his older self to drawl out something in another incoherent language.

“Harry don’t do it!” A girl’s voice had screamed as she rushed forward, her long, shiny brown hair flowing behind her as she buried her head in the older Harry’s arms, causing his older self’s eyes to cloud for a moment, the light surrounding him weakening.

Harry squinted in the darkness, trying to make out the face of the girl who had wrapped her arms around his older self but the vision was too blurred... All he could make out was that the seventeen-year-old girl seemed to be with child, her delicate form weak and trembling with sobs.

The emerald-eyed boy could only watch as the older Harry pulled out of the embrace again, his face suddenly changing as though a sudden, darker spirit had possessed his entire body, taking control of his entire self as Harry could no longer see his own self in the older boy.

The brown-haired girl gasped as the older Harry shoved her violently to the floor, pointing his wand now at the raven-haired girl in front of him, his eyes glistening in something unreadable.

Harry’s eyes widened when he recognized who she was...

"AJ!" He tried to scream out again but once again, as before, no sound had come out of his mouth, causing him to curse in frustration and try running into them but he was even more stunned when he went right through their body as though they were mere ghosts..., so realistic yet something he could not relate with at all... Something he couldn't do anything about but watch.

"Harry... Please... Don't do this..." the seventeen-year-old form of his sister had whispered shakily, tears streaming down her glistening emerald eyes as she looked at him pleadingly, seeming to glow in her own light for a minute as the twins locked gazes.

"I must kill you... Must...Kill... Must...Kill..." The older Harry seemed to drawl, his eyes wide and blankly glowing, his voice emotionless, cold and unforgiving, sounding as though he was in some sort of dark trance, not at all like himself... Like something else was inside him... Controlling him with its power...

"Harry, listen to me... I know you're still in there... I know you can hear me... Please... Fight it... Don't let it control you... Fight back... I love you... Harry..." AJ whispered again, shaking in sobs as she bravely faced his outstretched wand, directing it right at her heart.

"If you can... If you really intend to... Kill me... Kill me now... Please Harry... It's me.... AJ... Harry, don't you remember? Look at me... Please... Please, don't do this..." She begged, shakily letting herself collapse on her knees, looking up at him, meeting his blank emerald eyes with her own.

"Must kill... Must kill...The prophecy...I must..." the older Harry whispered, half in English and half in another strange language, his eyes glinting as he stared down at his sister, ignoring the harsh sobs of the brown-haired girl at his feet, watching in horror and pain.

"Harry... 'I' love you too... I need you... You promised me Harry... You promised it would all end... That we would live together... Spend our future together... Raise our child... Harry... Don't do this... I beg you...Remember Harry... Remember me... Remember 'us'..." The brown-haired girl whispered, looking up at him.

Harry didn't respond, just raising his wand above his head, his eyes fixed intently on the trembling form on his sister kneeling in front of him.

"Harry! Don't do it! Please!" A blonde-boy had screamed out, rushing forward immediately but he stopped as he reached them, pounding furiously on the magical barrier that Harry had placed behind them, not allowing the boy to go through.

The boy pounded on the barrier furiously, watching the scene unfold in front of him as tears were clearly visible streaming down his cheeks as he pounded his trembling fists harder on the barrier but to no avail, causing him to collapse onto his knees as well, looking helplessly at them as he cried openly at the scene.

The real Harry walked slowly up to the familiar boy, his eyes widening in suspicion at who he was but he couldn't tell much since the vision was still slightly blurry, leaving in him a daze of confusion.

"Who are you?" He mouthed, no sound coming from his mouth as he stared at the seventeen-year-old familiar boy, once again being ignored as the boy just looked straight ahead, his shiny, silver eyes fearful and anxious.

"Harry!! Don't do this! You're not like this, you can't!!" The blonde boy yelled but the words seemed to bounce right off the barrier as the older Harry seemed to just sneer in response, looking briefly at him before turning back to the kneeling girl in front of him.

"Here you all are... Bowing down before me... And before the great Salazar Slytherin... Well..., be that as it may, this will complete the prophecy..." Harry hissed in a poisonous voice, his voice sounding much different than the voice before.

The real Harry could only watch as his twin sister looked back carefully at the blonde boy behind them for a moment, then at the brown-haired girl, then Harry, letting out one final sob before she closed her eyes in defeat, one last tear rolling down her pale cheek just as Harry raised his wand over her head again.

"HARRY, PLEASE NO!!" The blonde boy screamed out loudly but it was too late, Harry had opened his mouth and dared to say the words threatening to come out as the brown-haired girl on the floor beside him let out a gasp.

Harry could only watch in horror as his seventeen-year-old self brought the wand down on his twin sister.

"AVADA—"

Harry bolted awake from his bed clutching his scar painfully, breathing very hard and gasping for breath as he wrenched his eyes open and looked around wildly for his silver-framed glasses, finally seeing them on the bedside table, hastily putting them on.

Harry looked around wildly again, his eyes still wide in fear and his hand still placed firmly on top of his painful, burning scar, causing him to hiss in pain again as he shut his eyes and tried to will the pain away, his whole body trembling at the memory of the dream.

He was still breathing very hard and his heart was pounding very rapidly in his chest as the pain in his scar faded and he wrenched his eyes open again, running a shaky hand through his now sweaty raven hair as he tried to remember what the dream had been all about.

What was I dreaming of?? Why had it been so bloody frightening? Harry thought, weakly collapsing back onto the bed, finally noticing that it was not only his hair droplets of sweat had seemed to accumulate on his head and neck, his chest still rising up and down rapidly from breathing too hard.

Harry shut his eyes for a split second before he shot up and pulled back the silk curtains on his bed, looking around the Slytherin boys' dormitories to see if he had woken any of the boys by his nightmare.

Looking right across from him, he saw that Draco's curtains were still shut over his bed along with Blaise, whose bed was right next to his, which meant that they were still asleep and hearing both Crabbe and Goyle's loud snores, he could only assume they were sound asleep as well.

Harry sighed in relief and closed his curtains around his bed again, collapsing onto the sheets with a slight smirk of amusement at his own stupidity... He had warned his twin AJ that she might be having nightmares their first night at Hogwarts... How ironic it was that he had been the one to have nightmares instead...

Harry ran a hand through his sweaty hair again, his breathing finally back to normal as he felt his heart seemed to do the same, finally allowing his trembling body to relax as his eyes fluttered shut again, letting out a breath of relief.

He rolled over in his bed, fusing his eyebrows together in confusion as he promptly tried to remember what he had been dreaming about but nothing seemed to come into his mind... He was drawing a complete blank...

Maybe it was too darn frightening that my mind intentionally erased it... Almost as if... My mind doesn't want to remember the dream... Like my mind is scared as well... Harry thought, clenching his hands slowly into fists.

Ignoring a cold sense of fear that began to envelop him, Harry slowly placed a hand on his lightning bolt scar, carefully feeling the harsh, rough jagged edges with his finger, squinting his eyes in confusion as he tried to remember what the dream had been about that had caused his scar to hurt like that...

He didn't want to think of it as a bad sign but just the night before in the Great Hall, He and AJ had felt a strange twinge in their scars when Prof. Quirrell had glanced at them from his table, his eyes unreadable and strangely suspicious.

What does it mean? Is my scar trying to tell me something? Harry asked no one in particular as he absently traced the scar on his forehead again, his eyes clouding over for a minute as he tried to register what it could mean.

It was just a dream... Just a dream...Nothing to worry about... Whatever it was, I'm glad I don't remember any of it...It sure scared the hell out of me... Harry thought as he pulled the blanket tighter around himself again, inhaling a deep breath to calm himself.

I'll feel better in the morning... He thought, his mind fading away as he felt a curtain of drowsiness pulled over himself again, his eyelids once again feeling heavy as he let himself drift off into a light, this time, dreamless sleep.

Unknown to Harry however, when he would wake up the next morning, he wouldn't remember anything at all...

"Hey Potter! Wake up!" A familiar drawling voice exclaimed, startling Harry awake from his deep sleep as a pair of strong, persistent hands began jostling him awake, yanking the covers off him.

Harry grumbled something under his breath, twisting his young handsome face into a growl before he flipped over and yanked the covers tighter around his form, burying his head under the pillow.

He heard a burst of amused laughter in front of him as he snuggled deeper into the bed, trying to wrestle away from the offending person who was still insisting on shaking him violently awake.

"Potter, you git! Wake up or we'll be late for breakfast!" The voice snapped again, this time more forcefully as Harry felt his blanket yanked away from him, causing him to curl up and shiver as the cold air hit him.

"Sod off!" Harry hissed dangerously, summoning the energy to force his leg out into a kick, managing to kick the nearest boy next to him, causing the boy to stumble onto the floor sloppily.

"Agh! Bloody hell Potter!" An extremely annoyed voice spat out right after Harry heard a loud thud, finally catching his interest as he slowly opened one amused-filled emerald green eye to see Draco sprawled on the floor, his sleek silver hair disheveled and his face twisted into a snarl.

Above him, right in front of Harry's bed, he saw Crabbe, Goyle and Blaise, all of whom laughing hysterically at the sight of Draco sprawled rather ungracefully on the floor, who in turn, glared right up at them in indignation.

Harry couldn't help it. He started laughing out loud with them, his face forming into a smirk as he stared down at his new best friend, finally getting up into a sitting position to see him better.

"That is the *last* time I try waking you up, Potter..." Draco complained bitterly, getting up and dusting his robes snobbishly, wrinkling his nose in disgust.

"Ugh... Look at me, I'm filthy already and I haven't even gotten to my first class yet... Bloody Potter..." Draco muttered again as Harry smirked wider, shrugging nonchalantly before he sprang up and stretched lazily, letting out a yawn.

"Well, there's a lot more where that came from, Malfoy." Harry said, giving him a wry lopsided grin before he headed for the showers, clapping Draco hard on the back as he did, causing the blonde to wince in pain, cursing under his breath again.

Blaise shot him a smirk, shaking his head as they all heard Harry turn on the shower in the other room, leaving the four Slytherins in the dormitory.

"Just what we need... Another Draco..." Blaise commented with a grin, causing Crabbe and Goyle to laugh in agreement as Draco only returned it with a shrug, an amused smile on his face.

"Whatever Malfoy, I'm going downstairs... Maybe I can catch AJ before she leaves for the Great Hall." Blaise said, shaking his head before he headed out the room, making his way down to the common room noisily.

"Let's wait for Harry, you two... I need someone sane to talk to at breakfast." Draco drawled, giving the two big boys beside him a sneer as they nodded dully in response, causing Draco to roll his eyes, obviously annoyed at their ignorance.

Once Harry had showered and had put on his new Hogwarts robes, he looked at himself intently in the mirror to check his appearance, meeting Draco's eyes behind him, who was giving him an amused smirk.

"Potter, might I suggest something?" He asked casually, raising an eyebrow at the raven-haired Slytherin in front of him.

Harry narrowed his eyes, turning around so he could face him with a questioning glance. "What?"

Draco grinned, walking over to his bed and pulling out a jar of something and handing it to Harry with a pointed look on his face.

"Fix your hair, Potter. The morning look is definitely out." He said, sniggering as Harry snatched the jar from him, growling in annoyance as Crabbe and Goyle sniggered behind them.

"You should really start to take care of it more often. After all, they say, and this is especially true to the ladies too, *the hair should make a statement*. As Slytherins, we should all look hot and handsome all the bloody time." Draco said gingerly, casually glancing arrogantly at his own perfectly gelled back silver hair in the mirror.

"I will, Malfoy, don't worry, I know that. I swear, you're such a girl." Harry drawled back, rolling his eyes at his friend's vanity.

Crabbe and Goyle grinned at this, both of them looking as though they agreed but Draco glared warningly at them, causing both boys to shut up instantly.

Harry continued to grumble to himself as he slipped his new silver-framed glasses on and began gelling his hair into spikes on his head, smirking at himself in the mirror when he admired his newfound appearance.

I am definitely one handsome bloke. Harry thought arrogantly as he began buttoning his robes, making sure every inch of his uniform was neatly and elegantly fixed, briefly admiring the way the Slytherin uniform seemed to compliment his entire image.

As soon as Harry was satisfied with his now perfectly tamed, spiky hair and his appearance, the four boys had casually began making their way to the Great Hall, Harry and Draco had in the middle, their new Slytherin badges displayed proudly on the chests.

Harry glared at every single student who dared to gape and stare at him as they made their way down the corridors, feeling his annoyance and his impatience increasing as he saw their jaws hanging open at the sight of him and their eyes flicking to see the scar.

Draco seemed to sense his friends irritation and obliged by sneering maliciously at everyone who looked curiously at them, Crabbe and Goyle flexing their muscles threateningly beside them at anyone who dared to get too close to either Draco or Harry.

Harry noticed this and relaxed, feeling a lot calmer and more protected in the presence of his new Slytherin friends as he just met the stares and the whispers everyone threw at him with a glare, secretly amazed at the effect that seemed to have as they looked away instantly, knowing very well the capabilities a Slytherin had.

Plus, everyone seemed to realize that Slytherins were very protective of their housemates, and seeing not only Draco Malfoy but also Crabbe and Goyle beside Potter, decided it would be better not to anger Harry in any way.

Even the paintings seemed to stare at Harry but he didn't pay them much attention, keeping his face calm and collected as Draco led them to the Great Hall, which Harry was extremely thankful for since other first year students seemed to be confused on where to go since he had been told the paintings, the suits of armor and everything else liked to move around every now and then.

The ghosts were obviously no help to the other first years as well since Harry could see that they all seemed to be pointing the students into the wrong directions, much to the amusement of Draco who kept laughing every time he saw it happen.

Harry snapped out of his thoughts when he saw a familiar trio in front of them, immediately nudging Draco as they both broke out into identical sneers, nodding to each other briefly before they rushed forward in a quick stride, intentionally crashing themselves roughly into the group of Gryffindors in front of them, causing the three to break apart and stare after their backs angrily as they passed.

"Stupid Slytherin gits!" Seamus snapped at their backs but the four Slytherins didn't turn around, Harry and Draco just chuckling under their breaths, looking very pleased with themselves as they passed.

"Just let it go, Ron. They're just being childish pricks anyway..." Hermione said, putting a hand on his shoulder to prevent the redheaded Gryffindor from lunging at the Slytherins in anger.

Ron's eyes flashed as he broke out into a taunting grin, glaring at the retreating Slytherins in malice.

"Yeah! Did you hear that?! You're just being childish pricks!" Ron snapped at them, immediately causing Harry and Draco to stop abruptly right in the middle of the crowded corridor, both Slytherins whirling around with anger evident in their eyes.

"You want to say that to our face, Weasley?" Draco taunted, a sneer on his face as he stared at all the Gryffindors in disdain, loathing clear on his handsome features.

Hermione once again tried to hold Ron back but he managed to escape her grasp and stepped forward, looking at both Slytherins in defiance, raising his chin at them.

"Yeah... You got a problem with us, say it Gryffindor." Harry added, a similar sneer on his own face as he stared at them.

Ron opened his mouth to say something but Crabbe and Goyle both stepped forward in front of the Slytherin duo, looking down at Ron in warning.

Ron glared back resentfully but backed off at Seamus hissed warning in his ear, both Gryffindors looking hesitantly up at Crabbe and Goyle's huge forms.

"Figures... You two would need these two cronies of yours to fight your battles. Slytherins were always cowards." Ron said spitefully, causing Crabbe and Goyle to step forward again.

"Ron! Shut up, look at them, they're huge! They'll cream you!" Seamus hissed at him but before any of them could say anything else,

Peeves the Poltergeist, one of the well-feared ghosts as Hogwarts, particularly for his the havoc he caused with his nasty tricks, appeared out of nowhere behind Harry and Draco.

Ron couldn't help grinning as neither Slytherins seemed to notice Peeves carrying a trash can behind them filled with garbage, a wicked gleam in the ghost's eye as he promptly turned the trash can over the two sneering boys, the dirty trash tumbling down onto its suspecting victims.

Harry and Draco both looked at each other for a minute with horrified looks in their faces, their eyes widening slowly before they dared to look at themselves, their eyes nearly bulging out in horror.

"ARGH!!"

Ron, Seamus and Hermione all burst out laughing as both Harry and Draco screeched in response, the trash particles and dirt falling down onto their neat uniforms and sticking onto their hair.

"Merlin's bloody hell!! Peeves! I'll get you for this!" Harry shouted angrily up at the ghost as he wrinkled his nose in disgust at himself, flushing dark red in humiliation as the Gryffindors in front of them began laughing harder as they watched him and Draco pick the garbage off themselves with sick looks on their faces.

"Ooh... Filthy Slytherins! Serves you right!" Peeves hollered, cackling uncontrollably before he disappeared down the corridor again, leaving the two Slytherins a filthy, disgusting mess.

"Tsk, tsk! Both of you should be ashamed of yourselves! It's the first day of class and already you're filthy!" Hermione said for a moment, giving them a toothy smile as Ron and Seamus laughed again before the three Gryffindors pushed past them, still laughing animatedly as they headed for the Great Hall.

"Ugh... What now Harry? Draco?" Crabbe asked dully, scratching his head as he looked at the two fuming boys in front of them, both blushing red half in humiliation and half in anger.

Harry took one look at the big boy before he muttered a dark curse under his breath and rolled his eyes at their stupidity, trying in vain to straighten his robes once again.

"Harry! Draco! What happened to the two of you?" A familiar, amused-filled female voice asked as they looked up, seeing AJ and Blaise heading for the Great Hall, both of them with smirks on their faces.

"Bloody Peeves! He dumped the whole trash can on us!! That no good, worthless piece of crap is going to get it from me!" Harry ranted angrily, hurling a disgusting piece of soiled wrapper onto the floor.

"And what's worse, right in front of those bloody Gryffindor losers too! I hate having them walk out on us being the one who had the last word..." Draco muttered, wrinkling his nose again as he carefully peeled a piece of candy wrapper from his hair, wincing in disgust.

AJ giggled before shifting the heavy books in her arms, taking her wand out of her pocket and pointing it at the two boys in front of her.

They all watched in awe as she muttered something and flicked her wand, instantly returning Harry and Draco's robes back to normal and taking away the horrible stench of garbage, causing both boys to sigh in relief.

"Although, I have to admit, you look better in garbage, Malfoy." She said sarcastically, throwing a sneer at Draco, who gladly obliged, irritation flashing in his eyes.

"Oh shut up, Potter..." Draco drawled in annoyance, rolling his eyes at her as AJ only grinned innocently in response, leaning over to give her twin a peck on the cheek before she walked on, Blaise trailing after her, an amused smile on his face.

They soon followed right after, Harry making sure there was no more garbage left on his robes as they entered the Great Hall, once again ignoring the stares everyone threw in their direction, heading directly for the Slytherin table.

Breakfast came by actually pretty quick and silent for the Slytherin table as every one seemed to be intent on eating quietly, all the students nervously checking on the prefects who seemed to glare at anyone who made too much noise.

Both Harry and AJ noticed the stares still given to them from the other, much noisier tables, whispers and hushed muttering heard all around them as everyone seemed to be glaring at them with suspicion, almost as if they didn't trust that the Potter twins were in Slytherin.

He was definitely glad when breakfast was over and he and the rest of the Slytherins in his year hastily began making their way down to their first classes for the day, once again, maintaining a quiet atmosphere as they walked on in two straight lines, not one of them daring to say a word.

It was during this week that Harry finally realized that though Hogwarts was unlike any other place he had ever seen, it was still, most definitely a *school* as the classes seemed to keep them all crammed with workloads and assignments, alternating throughout the entire week.

He also learned that among all subjects, he probably hated Herbology, taught by a dumpy witch named Prof. Sprout, the worst, frankly because he thought it was a complete waste of time.

He was certainly less than interested to be playing around with plants, especially if the class was with the Hufflepuffs, which Blaise seemed to hate.

However, when it came to the classes he hated, he certainly could not leave out History of Magic, which was easily the most boring class they all had that even *Draco*, who was almost as studious as AJ was, fell asleep during Prof. Binns' boring, monotonous lecture.

In fact, the only Slytherin first year who seemed to stay awake during his class was AJ, although there were times that Harry could still notice her eyelids drooping heavily or her gaze becoming blank and he loved nothing more than to catch her on those occasions.

Charms however, proved to be extremely amusing to him, since Prof. Flitwick had given one very interesting squeak at the sight of Harry and AJ's names and had toppled off the stack of books he stood on to see all of them with his small height, crashing to the floor.

However, when it came to Transfiguration, taught by stern and strict Prof. McGonagall, Harry and Draco both had to watch what they did since she didn't seem to keen on them anymore ever since Harry's open display of mockery to her on their first night.

It didn't help that she was the head of Gryffindor house either since she seemed to be finding possible ways in order to deduct more points from their house at any of Harry or Draco's wrong moves.

In fact, the only Slytherin she probably liked was probably AJ, who seemed to enjoy her class as she visibly knew the answer to every question McGonagall asked them all, earning back the points Harry or Draco lose during the class.

Draco seemed to find this extremely annoying as he would glare at the raven-haired girl every chance he got, muttering very colorful words under his breath while AJ would just smirk back at him, a smug look in her eye.

Harry had to laugh... He didn't know why but those two seemed to *love* to annoy each other any chance they got, easily finding even the simplest actions irritating on their part or simply just for the heck of it.

Draco absolutely resented the fact that AJ was easily the smartest student in their house since he himself had been wanting that particular spot for weeks now. He just didn't enjoy the fact that a *girl* was smarter than he was at grades, despite all Harry's warnings at him at how smart AJ really was despite being a '*girl*' as he said.

Harry had been looking forward to Defense Against the Dark Arts but as soon as Prof. Quirrell had started his lecture, his interest in it seemed to fade away rather quickly, twisting his face into a mocking sneer at the joke-of-a-teacher in front of him.

The whole week seemed to drag by very slowly, each day heading off to one classroom or the other, each day having classes with the

Ravenclaws or the Hufflepuffs, or worse, the Gryffindors, which Harry found extremely annoying.

Why couldn't they just teach us all separately by house? He had wondered but Draco had assured him that all they had to do was stick by Crabbe and Goyle and they would make sure no one got too close to them if they didn't want them to.

He was glad when it was already Friday morning and he and Draco plopped themselves down on their usual seat in the Slytherin table, noticing Hedwig there who had a letter attached to her leg.

Checking the letter for a moment, Harry turned to his twin sister, who was talking animatedly to Lila and Pansy beside her, all three girls laughing at something Pansy had just said.

"Hey AJ, you want to come with me later to see Hagrid? He's inviting us to have tea with him after our first class." Harry asked, shrugging at her.

AJ's eyes lit up as she nodded in response, giving him a grin. "Sure, that'd be worth looking forward to. Tell him we'd love to come." She answered brightly before she turned back to her friends, Harry hastily writing a reply before sending Hedwig off again, turning back to his breakfast.

He yawned loudly as he and Draco finally began making their way to their first class for the day, the other Slytherins following behind them once again, in straight silent lines, all of them struggling with the loads of books in their arms.

"What's our first class, Draco?" Harry asked as they rounded the corner, heading down towards the dungeons to find their classroom.

"Double Potions with the Gryffindors. Don't worry Harry, you'll *enjoy* Potions, it's my favorite subject! Prof. Snape is really wicked and plus, he *favors* us Slytherins, we don't have to worry about bloody Gryffindors here." Draco drawled, breaking out into his usual sneer as they reached the cold dungeon, glad for once that this classroom was amongst Slytherin territory.

Looking around, they noticed that Prof. Snape wasn't there yet so Harry led Draco, Crabbe and Goyle to a seat in the front row, Harry and Draco in the middle while Crabbe and Goyle sat on either side of them, looking around curiously.

AJ plopped down on the seat right behind them next to Blaise, who in turn leaned over and whispered something in her ear as the Gryffindors all began to enter the room one by one, looking extremely nervous.

AJ laughed slightly at Blaise's words, pulling away to shoot a smug smile at Hermione in the seat right across from her, raising both her eyebrows up in challenge for a moment, before smirking and turning away, nudging Blaise to shut up for a minute before they both broke out into sniggers again, trying in vain to stop.

She had been told that in her house, Hermione Granger was the smartest student there was and it had pissed her off, to say the least that there was somebody else in the year that could rival her...

She had vowed to herself that by the end of the year, *she* would be the top student in the whole first year... She wasn't about to let Granger beat her out of the top spot...

Hermione glared angrily at the two of them but that only seemed to make them snigger louder, until AJ finally gave up and buried her head in her arms, giggling to herself.

Just as Hermione opened her mouth to point out something sarcastic to the Slytherin, they all heard a loud bang behind them, causing them all to jump and whirl around to see Prof. Snape sauntering into the room, his robes billowing behind him dramatically, a mocking sneer on his face.

"I shall begin with a roll call for now... Everyone would best be quiet or I shall not hesitate in taking points off your house." Prof. Snape drawled slowly, settling himself on his desk and taking out the parchment of their names, a bored look on his face.

"Ah... Mr. and Ms. Potter... So, you are both finally here... Well, no doubt then that this year, and frankly, this class will certainly prove to

be much more interesting than the others I've had so far..." Snape softly, looking intently at Harry and AJ, who grinned back at him in response.

A strange, haunting look suddenly came into Snape's eyes when he saw their emerald eyes, looking a little disturbed for a minute before he tore his gaze away, his eyes wide at something.

"Well... I see you both have your mother's eyes... Lily was a fine witch, she was, if I may say so... And... She was extremely fond of this particular class... Let us see if you can match up to the same talents she had in Potion making." Snape said, taking a deep breath again before he finally moved on, calling off the next names on the list.

"Aha... *Another Weasley...* I daresay... The whole lot of your brothers have been a nuisance in my class... No doubt you surely will be the same..." Snape said, looking at Ron with a smirk as Harry and Draco both sniggered behind their hands, causing Ron to turn an interesting shade of pink.

Snape regarded the two of them with a small fond smirk for a moment, raising an eyebrow slightly in thought.

Seems they have inherited Lily and Lucius' personality... He thought for a moment before he shook his head and stood up in one swift gesture, walking very slowly to the front.

"You are all here to learn the exact science of Potion-making... There will definitely be *no* foolish wand waving here and I don't really expect you to understand the beauty of simmering cauldron... The delicate power of liquids that can creep through human veins, bewitching the mind, ensnaring the senses... That is... If you aren't like the usual dunderheads I have to teach..." Prof. Snape spoke in a light whisper but they heard every word, all of them hanging on his lecture.

There was a tense silence in the room as everyone seemed to have different reactions to their professor's words.

Harry and Draco both exchanged smirks, both of them extremely confident in this class since Draco had finally persuaded Harry to

read up and study for Potions, both of them having studied their textbook intently so as to win Snape's favor right away.

Ron and Seamus had exchanged wary glances with raised eyebrows from the Gryffindor side of the room while Hermione, much to Harry's secret amusement, was on the edge of her seat, wanting desperately to show Snape what she could do.

"Mr. Potter..." Snape said, looking at Harry intently as Harry looked up and easily met his gaze, ignoring the curious looks everyone around him threw at him.

"Tell me... What would I get if I added the powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood?" Snape asked, looking intently at his student to try and test his abilities, ignoring both Hermione and AJ's hands swinging frantically in the air as the two girls seemed to exchange glares at each other, each one wanting to be called first.

Harry just smiled back calmly at him, throwing a smug look at the Gryffindors before he answered with a confident tone in his voice.

"The answer is easy sir- Asphodel and wormwood, when added together, can make a powerful sleeping potion that it is referred to as the Draught of Living Death." He answered slowly, returning Draco's grin.

Snape smirked, nodding in approval as he shot Harry an impressed smile at his complete answer, noticing that both Hermione and AJ had dropped their hands in disappointment.

"Very good Mr. Potter... Five points to Slytherin... Now, let's see... Mr. Malfoy? Let's see if you are as bright as Mr. Potter here..." Snape said, his gaze drifting from Harry to Draco, who straightened at the mention of his name, causing Ron to snort in amusement from his seat.

"What a bunch of suck-ups..." He muttered to Seamus, who sniggered to himself in response, both Gryffindors shaking their heads.

"Mr. Malfoy, where would you look if I told you to find me a bezoar?" Snape asked, once again, ignoring Hermione and AJ's hands in the air, looking intently at Draco, who hadn't even blinked, quirking his lips into a sideways grin.

"A bezoar, sir, is a stone taken from the goat which has the ability to save you from most poisons." Draco replied easily, giving AJ a pointed look which she returned with a glare, letting her hand drop down in disappointment again.

Snape nodded again, giving Draco another approving look. "Very good, Mr. Malfoy. Five points to Slytherin... Now then, let's see if you Gryffindors can match up to my Slytherins here... Weasley, what is the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?" He asked, turning to give Ron a venomous glare.

Ron glared right back, not at all looking intimidated but instead, hateful as he saw both Harry and Draco shaking with laughter, angering him even more.

"I don't know sir... You could try Hermione or maybe even the female Potter over there, they both seem to know the answer very badly." Ron retorted slowly, causing the Gryffindors to laugh slightly.

Snape's glare turned dangerous as his eyes narrowed very slowly at the redhead Gryffindor in front of him, not at all pleased with the disrespectful tone in his voice as Harry and Draco both shot Ron a hateful look from their seat, which the Gryffindor returned with a blank glare of his own.

"Sit down!" Snape barked at Hermione, who jumped but sat down immediately, flushing dark red in humiliation as Snape finally turned to AJ, who was trying hard to control her laughter, an amused look on her face as Snape finally called on her.

"Sir, monkshood and wolfsbane are exactly the same plant, which is also recognized to others by the name Aconite." AJ answered confidently, meeting Draco's annoyed look with a taunting grin, obviously pleased with herself.

Snape quirked his lips into a half-smile, looking like he wanted to say something but he held it back, nodding at AJ in approval once again.

“Excellent, Ms. Potter. I am proud to see my students all taking their classes seriously. Five more points to Slytherin. As for you Gryffindors, one point will be taken for your cheek, Weasley. Now, pair up, we will begin your first potion.” Snape said, turning his back to the class.

Harry and Draco instantly paired up while AJ paired with Blaise, the Slytherins all immediately starting to work on the Potion Snape began to instruct them to do, a tense silence suddenly filling the room as they did.

It was a simple potion on Harry and Draco’s part however and pretty soon, everyone noticed that Snape seemed to take a fond liking to the Slytherin pair, spending a lot of time watching Harry and Draco confidently work on their potion, both boys seeming to know exactly what they were doing.

Snape irritated the rest of the Gryffindors, and possibly the other Slytherins as well when he began telling them all how perfect Harry and Draco seemed to be concocting their potion, making sure they all watched how *perfectly* they cut up their ingredients or how *perfectly* they stewed their potion or simply anything at all.

AJ couldn’t help watch in slight disappointment since almost every teacher seemed to like *her* best of all among her housemates but she didn’t have much time to dwell on it since they all turned to look at the hissing sound coming from Neville Longbottom’s table where they saw that somehow, Neville had managed to melt Seamus’ cauldron into a twisted blob.

AJ watched in horror as Neville’s potion began seeping through the table and into the floor, burning holes in other people’s shoes.

They all watched as Neville, who was completely drenched in the Potion, began moaning in agony as angry boils began to sprout all over his entire body.

Snape rounded on them immediately, a sneer on his face as he regarded Neville's condition, looking much more highly amused than concerned about the boils on his face.

"Idiot boy... I suppose you added the porcupine quills before taking the cauldron off the fire? Finnegan, take him to the hospital wing!" He snapped at Seamus before rounding on Ron, who was working with Hermione right beside them.

"You, Weasley! Why didn't you tell him not to add the quills?! That's another point from Gryffindor!" He spat at them, immediately causing Ron's face to heat up and for him to open his mouth to argue but Hermione kicked him under the table, shaking her head.

As soon as the two boys left, the Slytherins collapsed into laughter, the loudest ones being Harry and Draco, although Blaise was a close second as he struggled to keep his composure, his form trembling with mirth.

Snape didn't seem to mind as he just passed them by, not at all scolding them for the laughter they made as the Gryffindors all glared back poisonously at them, trying to stick up for their housemate.

Even AJ seemed to find this funny as she giggled behind her hand, trying to cover it up in contrast to the other Slytherin girls behind her, who were giggling shrilly, not at all bothering to lower their voices.

As soon as class was over however, Harry told Draco, Crabbe and Goyle to go on off without him as AJ promptly told Blaise to do the same before Harry draped an arm over his sister's shoulders and the two Slytherins made their way to Hagrid's hut, both still in their Hogwarts robes.

The twins finally found Hagrid's cabin on the edge of the Forbidden forest as AJ stopped in front of the door and promptly knocked politely, causing Harry to roll his eyes at his sister's formality but soon after, they heard a frantic scuffling inside and Hagrid opened the door, beaming at them.

"Hang on yeh two, back Fang! Back!" Hagrid protested as he kept a firm hold on his huge boarhound as the twins stepped inside, settling

themselves on the armchairs beside the fireplace, glancing around the small but cozy one-roomed cabin.

AJ's eyes sparkled at the sight of the boarhound, grinning up at Hagrid excitedly. "Does he bite, Hagrid?" She asked, looking at Fang.

Hagrid shook his head, giving AJ a smile. "No, o' course not! He's very friendly, even with strangers, though that's not always a good thing." Hagrid said as AJ slid off the chair and went over to pet Fang, who immediately jumped into the small girl's arms, causing her to laugh in surprise.

Harry shot his twin a grin, shaking his head. "AJ here is fond of dogs. Or any other *cute* animal for that matter." He explained to Hagrid, who was watching AJ in amusement.

"Which is exactly why I'm sane enough to be fond of *you*." AJ retorted derisively, causing Harry to growl at her in annoyance and Hagrid to laugh in response.

"Well, how are yeh two holdin up? Anythin' botherin you or have the Slytherins been treatin yeh both alright?" Hagrid asked, looking at them intently.

Harry and AJ both nodded with identical grins on their faces, helping themselves to the rock cakes Hagrid set out for them in front of the small table.

"Yeah, they're great. We really feel at home there, they're all cool people." Harry answered, trying to hide a grimace of pain as he had promptly bit hard onto the rock cake, nearly breaking his teeth.

Hagrid, to their surprise, didn't look too amazed by this coming from Harry but he turned to look at AJ in disbelief, raising an eyebrow at her in question. "Even AJ? Are yeh doin' well in Slytherin?" He asked.

AJ nodded, not noticing the skeptical tone in Hagrid's voice as she did, as she tried, hiding a grimace herself to chew the rock cake, pretending to enjoy it but actually moaning out in pain in her head.

"You bet, Hagrid. Everyone seems to be really friendly to us and the Slytherins are so much better than those other houses." AJ answered cheerfully, giving Hagrid a smile.

Hagrid's eyes were wide but he nodded, looking at her with an unreadable look in his eye before he turned to look at Harry again, who began ranting on and on about their first few days of classes, particularly lingering on Potions, which was his new favorite subject.

Harry and AJ had both smirked when they heard Hagrid call Argus Filch, who was the annoying, ugly caretaker at Hogwarts, 'an old git', frankly because the twins hated Filch, who seemed to go out of his trouble to catch them doing something wrong any chance he got.

Plus, he seemed to be keeping a close watch on Harry and Draco now ever since he had caught the two trying to force their way inside a locked door when they had gotten lost in Gryffindor territory, which had unfortunately turned out to be the forbidden corridor Dumbledore had warned them about.

Harry also began raving on about Prof. Snape, grinning as he told Hagrid all about what had happened at Potions, momentarily shocking the huge man as he took in Harry's entire personality change.

He's growin more and more like Lily everyday... Wonder when AJ would start to act more like James... Hagrid thought as Harry continued on talking, not noticing the annoyed look his twin was giving him.

"Snape really seems to be fond of me... He looks like an interesting professor... He seems to be the only one who actually does his job well..." Harry said, rolling his eyes as he thought of his other professors.

"Well, o' course Snape favors yeh! Yer the—" Hagrid cut himself off midsentence, turning wide, panicked eyes to the twins, who looked at him in confusion.

"Yes, Hagrid?" AJ pressed, looking curiously at Hagrid who shook his head hastily, giving them a nervous laugh.

"Well, yer the best students there is! O' course Snape will favor yeh! He likes those who exceed his expectations!" Hagrid said hastily before abruptly changing the topic, catching Harry off guard for a minute as he narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

As Hagrid ranted on and on to AJ, Harry took the time to pick up the newspaper, the *Daily Prophet*, on the table, raising an eyebrow as he read the article, his eyes widening as he read about the latest Gringotts break-in, his jaw dropping open when he saw that it happened exactly on their birthday- July 31.

"Gringotts goblins insist nothing was taken and that the vault had in fact, been emptied earlier the same day." Harry read under his breath, his eyes narrowing suspiciously into slits now as he turned and looked at Hagrid questioningly.

"Hagrid! The Gringotts break-in happened on our birthday! It might have happened while we were there!" Harry interrupted, causing AJ's eyes to bulge out as she snatched the article from him, Hagrid not meeting their eyes as he did.

Harry looked at him intently, a serious look on his face as he vaguely tried to remember the package Hagrid had taken from vault 713 that day... Could that have been what the thieves were after? Why hadn't Hagrid told them what it was?

Meeting AJ's eyes across from him, he recognized the same questions and suspicions running through his twin's mind that mirrored his own, both of them looking very intently at Hagrid in confusion.

And for some reason, Harry could sense that there was definitely something about Prof. Snape that Hagrid wasn't telling him... He could only wonder what it was...

Hermione never thought she could harbor so much hate for a single person alone until she came to Hogwarts but that was of course, before she met Harry and AJ Potter, who both basically went out of their way to annoy her and her friends any chance they got.

It was very much a big surprise to Hermione since she had always thought that the twins seemed rather friendly in the zoo and on the train before Malfoy took them away, a little snobbish in a way but certainly not like the people they were now...

She had even developed this strange hope that despite being in different houses and being in different circles of friends, she could have still been able to stay friends with the twins but it looked as if that would never happen in a million years...

Funny what Slytherin house could do to enhance a person's negative side in one week... Hermione thought bitterly as she thought of how she and AJ had suddenly developed this fierce rivalry in academics, both wanting to achieve higher marks in each class.

Good thing we only have Potions and that flying class with the Slytherins... I don't know how I could handle it if we had to have all our classes with the Slytherins... Hermione thought in relief, shaking her head.

“Great... Now when any of us make fools out of ourselves, it would have to be in front of Potter and Malfoy.” Ron had muttered as the Gryffindors all began eating their breakfast on their table, all of them talking about their flying lesson.

“Now Ron, you *won't* make a fool of yourself. You've had experience before, in fact, we *both* have and right now, I'm thinking the only ones who are going to make fools of themselves are Potter and Malfoy. They're all talk anyway.” Seamus told him confidently, clapping him reassuringly on the back.

Ron grinned in agreement, nodding. “You're certainly right about that... I was getting rather sick of hearing Malfoy brag to all his friends about how good he was on the broom... It gets rather sickening how he always talks about first years not being allowed on the team.” He said, rolling his eyes.

“Well *I'm* a little nervous about this whole class... I haven't even ridden on a broom before...” Hermione admitted as she glanced across the room to where Malfoy was once again, bragging very

loudly to Potter how he could easily make the Quidditch team if they only allowed first years in.

Rolling her eyes, she turned back to the other Gryffindors and promptly began boring them all by starting one of her well-known lectures about this book she had recently read, *Quidditch Through the Ages*, though to her annoyance, only Neville Longbottom seemed to be paying attention to her words.

Just as Hermione was about to reprimand them all for not paying attention to her, something caught her attention and she looked up in surprise to see once again, the arrival of the owls for the mail delivery.

Hermione ducked as a barn owl swooped down on them and landed right in front of Neville, carrying a round package with its legs which Neville opened excitedly, revealing what looked like a large marble with white smoke inside it.

“A Remembrall! It’s a magical device Gran sent me that glows red whenever I forget something.” Neville told them all excitedly, holding the Remembrall in his hands.

“Well, you’ve forgotten something.” Ron pointed out as the Remembrall glowed dark red, causing the Gryffindors to chuckle in amusement.

Just as Neville was trying to remember what it was, Draco Malfoy sauntered over to their table and rudely snatched the Remembrall out of Neville’s hands, causing both Ron and Seamus to jump up immediately.

“Give that back, Malfoy!” Ron spat at him as Malfoy just sneered and tossed the Remembrall to Potter, who had walked up beside him, inspecting the Remembrall with a raised eyebrow and a smirk on his face.

Seamus stepped forward but before anything could happen, Prof. McGonagall had arrived, looking at them sharply as though she could tell something was going on.

"What is going on here, Mr. Finnegan?" She asked sternly, shooting a suspicious, disapproving look at the two Slytherins who were now scowling in annoyance.

"Malfoy and Potter stole my Remembrall, Professor." Neville answered, pointing at the two Slytherins who both scowled darker, rolling their eyes.

"We were only looking, Professor. We weren't going to take his *stupid* Remembrall." Potter muttered, rudely dropping the Remembrall back on the table and raising an eyebrow promptly at Hermione before he and Malfoy sauntered back to their table, muttering something under their breaths.

Hermione sighed as she watched them go, shaking her head at those two boys' attitude put together... Those two, even if they were only in first year, would no doubt someday make the Weasley twins look like angels...

She could only hope Ron and Seamus could resist their advances... It seemed the two Slytherins seemed to demand nothing more from them than to be fought with and it was really starting to get on her nerves.

A burst of hysterical laughter caught Hermione's attention from the Slytherin side of the room as they all looked up and saw Justin Finch-Fletchley, a Hufflepuff first year, sprawled on the floor next to the Slytherin table, Blaise Zabini, another Slytherin first year, looking very smug as he looked down at him.

Zabini must have tripped Justin as he was passing by their table... Hermione decided as she watched Justin flush dark red but get up and walked calmly to the Hufflepuff table, ignoring the laughing Slytherins.

Hermione winced in disgust at them as she saw AJ Potter clap Blaise on the back in amusement, giggling slightly before returning back to the thick books and parchments laid out in front of her, very similar to the ones Hermione had in front of her as well.

By the time they had all finished breakfast, the Gryffindors began making their way down to the Quidditch pitch for their first flying lesson, all of them twitching in both excitement and nervous at the same time.

The Slytherins were already there, all of them arranged in a single, neat and silent line behind a row of neatly arranged broomsticks in front of each student.

Quietly, before the Slytherins could say anything else, the Gryffindors all arranged themselves into a straight line as well, the class waiting silently for Madam Hooch to arrive.

Across from Ron, he saw Malfoy nudge Potter and whisper something to him, no doubt about the Gryffindors, as Potter chuckled in response, shaking his head in obvious amusement.

Just as Ron opened his mouth to say something, Madam Hooch had arrived, looking very stern as she eyed them all carefully.

"Welcome to your first flying lesson here at Hogwarts. Well, let's not waste any time, everyone stand behind their broomstick and say 'Up!'" She ordered them, watching them closely.

"UP!!"

Hermione could only watch in disappointment as her own broomstick merely turned over once, not at all even lifting from the ground. Looking up, she saw that Potter and Malfoy's broomsticks had both shot up into their hands at the same time immediately, but it was some of the few that did.

Ron's had shot right up and had hit him square on the face, causing Seamus to hide his laughter and Ron to glare at his so-called best friend.

"UP!! UP, UP, UP!!" AJ protested impatiently, stamping her foot childishly on the ground as her broomstick just kept rolling over and over again, causing her eyes to flash dangerously.

For some reason, Blaise, whose broom had immediately leaped into his grasp as well, found this incredibly amusing as he burst into laughter at her, causing her to scowl darkly at him and mutter something unflattering under her breath.

Malfoy and Potter both looked around, looking very pleased with themselves as they watched everyone else struggle with their broomsticks, waiting with raised eyebrows until they had all managed to do it.

After everyone had their broomstick in their hands, Madam Hooch began teaching them all how to mount their brooms properly, stopping particularly in front of Malfoy, telling him publicly that he had been holding it wrong for years, much to Ron and Seamus' delight as they burst into sniggers.

The Slytherins had all glared darkly at them in defense of their housemate, particularly, Potter, Crabbe and Goyle who were all shooting dangerous, poisonous glares at the Gryffindors.

"All right, when I blow my whistle, you will all fly several feet above the ground then come right back down. On three, one, two—"

"Argh!" Neville screamed as he shot off into the air one second too late, causing the Gryffindors to scramble in shock and look up at him in worry while he began floating off the ground.

"Mr. Longbottom, come down this instant!" Madam Hooch yelled up at him but Neville had obviously lost control of his broomstick as his eyes widened at the ground below him, causing him to gasp in fear and accidentally let go of his broomstick, plummeting to the ground with a sickening crack.

His broomstick remained hovering in the air, drifting off into the Forbidden forest as Madam Hooch ran to his form on the ground, looking extremely pale with concern.

Malfoy found this particularly amusing as his face flushed dark red in suppressed laughter, his shoulders already shaking with mirth as Potter just bit down a smile, turning away so Madam Hooch couldn't see the laughter wanting to break out of him.

"It's a broken wrist... Well, come on then, to the Hospital Wing. The rest of you stay on the ground. If I see one broomstick up in the air, you'll be out of here faster than you can say 'Quidditch.'" Madam Hooch said sternly, helping a moaning Neville off the ground and leading him back to the castle.

As soon as they were gone, Potter choked back snort of laughter, which caused Malfoy to lose it eventually and he collapsed into hysterical laughter, causing Potter to join in and before long, the entire Slytherin house was sniggering in amusement.

"Did you see his face? The great lump!" Malfoy commented, causing the Slytherins to laugh harder, Potter laughing right beside him.

"Shut up, Malfoy!" Hermione snapped, glaring at him in defense for her housemate as Crabbe and Goyle both laughed at her daring, raising an eyebrow.

"Ooh... What's wrong, Granger? Defending your little fat, crybaby boyfriend?" Pansy Parkinson taunted from beside AJ, giving Hermione a disdainful smile.

"I wouldn't put it past Granger... Probably has a soft spot for losers..." AJ commented casually, the corner of her lips lifted into a lopsided smile of amusement.

By now, Hermione was shaking with anger, glaring very poisonously at AJ, who gave her a calm look, merely crossing her arms over her chest smugly.

"Look! It's that stupid Remembrall Longbottom was carrying around earlier!" Malfoy pointed out, stepping forward and picking up the Remembrall Neville had dropped on the ground, inspecting it closely.

"Give that here, Malfoy!" Ron spoke out bravely, causing the other Slytherins to become silent and watch as Malfoy's eyes flashed dangerously, glaring maliciously at Ron.

Ron stepped forward to grab the Remembrall from the blonde Slytherin's hands but Potter blocked him, shoving Ron away hard on the chest, causing the Gryffindor to stumble back in surprise.

Taking the Remembrall from Malfoy's hands, Potter raised it up to the sun and squinted at him distastefully, a sneer on his face.

"Hmm... What does this stupid thing do anyway? Doesn't' look all that interesting..." Potter commented sarcastically, chuckling as he swerved to avoid Ron's lunge again, tossing the Remembrall back to Malfoy, who caught it easily in one hand, grinning.

"If it doesn't look all that interesting, then give it back, Potter! That's not yours!" Seamus yelled angrily at him as Malfoy and Potter began tossing the Remembrall back and forth to each other, both of them catching it easily in one hand.

"Yeah, you both are such bullies!" Hermione yelled at them, glaring at the two as they continued to toss the Remembrall back and forth over Ron and Seamus' heads, who were both in the middle trying to catch it in mid-air.

Potter sneered at her, his eyes glinting as he watched Hermione glare back at him in absolute hatred.

"Oh yeah? What are you going to do about it, Granger?" He taunted, raising an eyebrow at her.

Dean Thomas, who had been watching the scene up until now, stepped forward to try and punch Potter either Malfoy but Crabbe and Goyle had suddenly blocked him away, using their huge forms to keep any Gryffindors from interfering.

"I said, give that here, Malfoy!" Ron yelled angrily, shoving Malfoy back, causing the blonde Slytherin to stumble back a few steps before he finally glared, his eyes narrowing as he grabbed the nearest broom, the Remembrall tight in his hand.

"No. I think I'll leave it somewhere for Longbottom to find—Let's say, up a tree?" Malfoy drawled as he shot into the air, flying gracefully into the sky as the other students watched him with gaping jaws.

Well, even Hermione had to admit that Malfoy certainly hadn't been lying at all... He certainly *could* fly well... And he proved it as he flew higher, Remembrall still clutched tightly in his hand.

"What's the matter, Weasley? Good beyond your reach?" He taunted again, shooting Ron a smirk from where he was hovering in the sky.

"Draco! Get down here! You could get us all in trouble!" AJ yelled up at him, looking around in panic but Malfoy just rolled his eyes at her, snorting in amusement.

Potter watched with a grin on his face as Malfoy promptly tossed the Remembrall up and down in his hand, looking at Ron, who was struggling with Hermione to fly up to get it.

AJ saw her twin brother grab the nearest broom as well and immediately put a hand on his shoulder, giving him a glare. "Harry, no! You'll get us all in trouble!" She protested but Harry ignored her, shooting into the air and zooming up easily after Malfoy, taken back at how easy it seemed to fly to him.

"Here, Weasley! I'll save you the trouble! I'll toss the Remembrall down and if you catch it before Harry does here, then you can have it! If you both miss, well, too bad!" Malfoy yelled, hurling the Remembrall down towards the ground as Ron and Hermione's eyes widened in panic, seeing the Remembrall heading dangerously towards them.

Potter immediately sped after it, a determined scowl on his face as he easily glided through the air as though he had been flying all his life, surprising both Malfoy and his sister as he flew gracefully even better than Malfoy did, looking incredibly relaxed and in control.

It was definitely the most wonderful feeling he had ever experienced... He was a natural on a broomstick... Exhilarating.. Exciting...

Even Hermione had to admit that Harry flew with the grace and swiftness of an eagle, seeming to dance around the air rather than fly, easily maneuvering the broomstick downwards into a dangerous dive after the Remembrall, his emerald eyes fixed intently on the ball.

Just as Ron snapped out of his surprise and remembered he was supposed to catch the ball, it was too late since Potter had already easily reached out a hand and caught the Remembrall instantly, a confident, self-pleased smile on his face.

The Slytherins all burst into cheers as AJ could only gape at her brother in surprise and awe, her jaw hanging open in disbelief.

"Harry!! Where the bloody hell did you learn to fly like that?! You flew like a bloody expert!" She exclaimed, giving him a big grin.

Potter looked thoughtful for a minute as Malfoy glided down slowly after him, his jaw hanging open as well as he stopped his broom right beside Harry, both of them hovering above the ground.

"I don't know... Genes, maybe?" He answered, giving her a confident grin before he turned back to Malfoy, who was still gaping at him.

"Bloody hell, Potter..." Was all he managed to choke out, his eyes glinting in awe, disbelief, jealousy and a strange sense of pride all at the same time, which Harry returned with a lopsided grin.

"Here, Weasley! Give Longbottom back his stupid Remembrall." Harry finally said, tossing the Remembrall carelessly back to Ron who caught it easily but was still looking at him in shock, his eyes bulging out.

"HARRY POTTER!" A voice barked, causing Potter to wince in surprise as he caught sight of Prof. Snape making his way towards them, a strange look on his face.

Both Potter and Malfoy immediately set back down onto the ground, looking nervously at their head of house as Snape took a hold of Potter's collar, dragging the wincing boy off back towards the castle.

Malfoy watched in surprise and confusion, turning to look at Zabini beside him in question. "I don't get it... Why did Snape only reprimand Harry" He asked, raising an eyebrow.

Zabini only shrugged, AJ biting her nails in panic beside him as Ron and Seamus both broke out into grins, handing the Remembrall to Hermione.

"Well, looks like Potter will finally be punished the way he deserves." Ron commented, shooting Potter a smug look.

Malfoy sneered back, holding a single hand up in the air to keep Crabbe and Goyle from lunging at the Gryffindors, giving Ron a look of pure loathing.

"You wish, Weasley." He drawled easily, rolling his eyes before he turned away from them snobbishly, walking back to the group of Slytherins beside them.

"Well, looks like your brother is finally going to get into trouble." Hermione commented to AJ who turned back sharply and glared icily at her, her emerald eyes narrowing in anger.

"I don't think so, Granger... Prof. Snape is our head of house and I have a feeling Harry's his new favorite student. Don't get your hopes up." AJ retorted back sarcastically before rolling her eyes and turning away from Hermione, sauntering off with the other Slytherins.

Ron and Seamus exchanged high fives beside Hermione just as the other Gryffindors grinned in agreement, nodding at them but Hermione only rolled her eyes, surprised she was actually hoping Potter wouldn't get punished too badly.

Oh rubbish... What do I care what happens to that prick! Hermione reprimanded herself, flushing slightly before she headed back to the castle with the other Gryffindors.

"Follow me, Potter." Snape said as he led Harry down the dungeons, obviously heading for a classroom as they stopped in front of what Harry recognized as the DADA classroom where Prof. Quirrell was teaching the Slytherin fifth years.

"Excuse me, Prof. Quirrell, might I have a word with my Slytherin prefect?" Snape asked coldly as they peered in the classroom, Harry's eyes widening in panic.

Flint was the prefect that had escorted them to their dorms their first night at Hogwarts right? Would 'he' be deciding his punishment? Harry wondered, raising an eyebrow.

Prof. Quirrell nodded immediately and Marcus Flint stepped out, shutting the classroom door behind him and looking at Prof. Snape and Harry curiously.

“Something you need, Prof. Snape?” He asked respectfully, looking at Harry in question but Harry shrugged in response, just as confused as he was.

“No Marcus but fortunately, I have something that *you* need. I have found you the next Slytherin Seeker.” Prof. Snape drawled lazily, shooting a proud look at Harry, whose eyes widened as Marcus’ eyes sparkled excitedly.

“Truly, Professor? Are you serious? Potter here is a first year, isn’t he?” Marcus asked, looking intently as Prof. Snape led them to his office.

“Naturally, Marcus. The boy’s just like his parents, he’s perfect, I never say anything like that before... Was that your first time on a broomstick, Potter?” Snape asked as he let them inside his office, gesturing for both students to sit down.

Harry could only nod as he sat down across from Marcus, who was now inspecting him very closely, a grin on his face.

“I saw it with my own eyes. He caught that thing after a fifty foot dive and didn’t even end up scratching himself. It was unbelievable.” Snape told Marcus, who was now looking at Harry as though he was a god.

“Do you know about Quidditch, Potter?” Marcus asked him excitedly, a full-fledged smirk on his face.

“Potter, Marcus here is the captain of the Slytherin team. He’s been searching for a new seeker ever since the last one graduated and so far, no one has met his expectations.” Snape told Harry, who nodded in response.

“I have. Draco’s been telling me all about it but I haven’t exactly experienced playing it before.” Harry admitted, shrugging nonchalantly.

"Well, then Professor, we need to get him a good broom. A Nimbus 2000 I daresay, he'll need the best!" Marcus told Prof. Snape, who merely nodded and smiled lazily in response.

Harry couldn't have wiped the humongous grin off his face if he tried, feeling a familiar feeling of confidence and delight overwhelm him as he returned Marcus' ecstatic look.

"Very well. I shall talk to the headmaster about bending the first year rule just this once... Merlin knows we need to train harder this year since blasted Gryffindor beat us last year... What a disgrace that was..." Prof. Snape drawled, suddenly scowling in disgust.

Snape then turned to look sharply at Harry, giving him a pointed look which Harry returned with a sheepish smile.

"You had better train hard Potter. Though, if I must admit, I am glad to have you on my house ... A student of my house who is both smart and talented at the same time never fails to impress me." Snape told him slowly, surprising Harry when he winked proudly at him.

"Your mother *and* your father were both Quidditch players themselves. It's in your blood, Potter."

Harry could only grin back at his professor, suddenly feeling another rush of excitement overwhelm him as he found himself anxious to be up in the air again.

"Bloody hell!!"

Harry smirked at Draco's reaction, merely shrugging as he, Draco and AJ made their way back to their dorms that night after Harry had told them both about what had happened with Snape and Flint.

"Harry! You lucky bloke! You got accepted on the Slytherin team as Seeker already?! First years are *never* allowed in!" AJ told him, her eyes wide with incredulity and pride.

Harry only laughed and slung an arm around her shoulders, ruffling her long hair in response. "Well, aren't you proud of your handsome older brother, then?" He asked, grinning.

AJ laughed and shrugged him off, rolling her eyes at his childish behavior. "Of course I am, you git! I think this is absolutely wonderful! We'll both be cheering for you, right Draco?" She turned to Draco, who was grumbling under his breath.

Rolling her eyes, AJ nudged him sharply, giving the blonde a poisonous glare as Draco scowled at her in response, turning to meet Harry's taunting grin.

"Yeah... I guess... It's just unfair! I wanted to be on the team and they didn't even pick me yet! I've been training hard all summer already!" Draco complained, pouting slightly.

AJ snorted with laughter but Harry glared sternly at her, causing his twin to sober immediately as Harry clapped Draco encouragingly on the back, giving him a grin.

"Oh cheer up, Draco! I'm sure you'll be accepted by the team right away when they see how good you are as a keeper! I already told Flint about it and he reckons that if only Dumbledore would bend the rule once more, he would have recruited you as well." Harry told him, remembering what Flint had told him earlier.

Draco raised an eyebrow, genuinely curious. "He did? So I take it I'm reserved a spot on the team already?" He asked, smirking.

Harry grinned, his eyes sparkling knowingly. "Yup. Don't tell anyone though, I promised Marcus I wouldn't tell you until Second year but I couldn't help it... Besides, they have to wait until our current keeper graduates before they can kick him off the team." He explained as they rounded the corner.

"Hmm... Well, that's reassuring I guess... At least I don't have to try out anymore..." Draco said, shrugging.

"Do you want to try out for the team too, AJ?" Harry asked, looking at his sister, who returned his glance with a thoughtful look.

"I'm not sure... Blaise and I were talking about trying out as beaters in our second year but we're still going to have to practice this year though..." She admitted, grinning sheepishly.

Draco snorted, giving AJ a disbelieving sneer. “Yeah right... Like they would ever let a *girl* try out as a beater...” He retorted wryly, causing Harry to wince and step back just in time as AJ aimed another fist right at Draco’s shoulder.

“How’s that for a girl, Malfoy?!” She snapped indignantly, raising her fist again but Draco ducked, wincing in pain as he clutched his shoulder.

“Geez... You’re such a cranky chick, AJ...” He commented, hastily running ahead so that she couldn’t have a chance to punch him again.

AJ let out a growl and ran after him, leaving Harry walking after them slowly, shaking his head in laughter as he watched Draco run faster, AJ trailing right behind him.

Then, sighing to himself, he reluctantly broke out into a run after them, following the two Slytherins around the complex corridors until Draco finally stopped abruptly, looking around in confusion as he scratched his head sheepishly.

“Uh... Where are we?” He asked Harry as he caught up with them, breathing heavily as the three Slytherins looked around the unfamiliar corridor, not a student in sight.

“You mean you don’t know where you led us, Malfoy?!” AJ shrieked at him angrily, whacking him on the head as Draco winced in pain again, growling at her in annoyance.

“Well I wasn’t really paying attention with you chasing after me!” Draco snapped back in equal irritation.

AJ opened her mouth to argue but Harry glared at both of them in anger, causing both Slytherins to shut their mouths immediately.

“Look you two, arguing will not help us anyway! Now why don’t we try that door over there? It might lead us back to the Slytherin dungeons.” Harry said calmly, walking over to the nearest door and trying to wrench it open but to no such avail.

“It’s locked....” He muttered under his breath, feeling his impatience start to bubble up inside him but AJ shoved him aside, taking her wand out and pointing it at the lock of the door.

“*Alohomora!*” She muttered and the lock opened instantly, causing Harry to smirk on amusement and Draco to snort in annoyance, which AJ only returned with a smug smile.

“Come on, let’s go...” AJ whispered as she led the two boys through the door, all of them immediately squinting in the darkness to see around them.

“*Lumos.*” Draco muttered, causing a beam of light to shoot out from his wand which he used to inspect the room, looking around in confusion.

“Somehow, why do I get the feeling we’re not supposed to be here?” AJ whispered fearfully as they walked around the dark room, Draco’s wand being the only light they had to see around them.

Draco was about to answer something sarcastic when he bumped into Harry, who had stopped abruptly in the very center of the room, his form rigid and stiff with shock and his face visibly pale even in the darkness of the room.

“Because we aren’t...” He replied shakily, his voice cracking in fear and panic as he stared straight ahead with wide, horrified emerald green eyes, pointing a shaky hand ahead of him.

Draco and AJ looked at each other intently for a minute, their forms trembling mirroring the fear in each other’s wide eyes before they both gulped in nervousness and slowly turned to see where Harry was pointing, feeling their eyes bulge out of their sockets.

His hand visibly shaking, Draco lifted his wand, allowing them all to crane their necks upwards and see the humongous three-headed monster dog in front of them, which was currently snarling up at them, its sharp teeth gleaming dangerously in the dark, silent room.

"H-H-help?" Draco breathed out, his voice cracking as well as he felt himself break out into a cold sweat at the sight of the humongous monster dog, nearly dropping his wand in fear.

"Well... Didn't you say you liked dogs, AJ?" Harry managed to crack weakly, gulping very loudly as he tugged at both AJ and Draco's hands, pulling them all one step backwards.

AJ opened her mouth to answer but nothing else had escaped her mouth, or Harry's and Draco's in fact but—

"AAAAAARGHHH!!"

They all screamed simultaneously as Harry yanked both Slytherins hands, forcefully dragging them out the door as the huge dog let out a vicious growl, lunging after them seconds before Harry managed to slam the door, he and Draco wrestling with it for a moment to prevent the dog from escaping the room before AJ used her wand and locked the door again.

As soon as the door was shut, the three Slytherins all collapsed on the floor, leaning against the door, all breathing very hard and their faces ashen with shock.

"Wha-What the *bloody hell* was that?!" Draco squeaked out, still breathing very heavily as he tried to catch his breath, his eyes still looking glazed over.

"Frankly... I'd rather not find out, Draco..." Harry answered weakly, rubbing his forehead as he felt his heart beating very painfully against his chest.

"Did you two see what it was standing on?" AJ asked suddenly, looking very suspicious.

Draco looked at her as though she was insane. "*Standing on?!* I wasn't looking at its feet! I was more preoccupied with its *three heads!*" He yelled at her, his eyes wide.

"Well, obviously *you* didn't notice, Draco but it was standing on a trapdoor so it was obviously placed there to guard something... I

reckon that was the forbidden corridor Dumbledore warned us about dying a painful death..." AJ told him in annoyance.

Harry looked intently at her, his eyes creased in question. "Do you think it was guarding that package Hagrid took out of the vault before?" He asked.

AJ just rolled her eyes before she got up to her feet, flipping her hair haughtily over her shoulder.

"I don't know and frankly, I don't care! I'm leaving before you two think of another creative way to get us killed!" She snapped, disgruntled before she stalked off, leaving Harry and Draco staring after her in bewilderment.

"You know... I wish I had been given a twin *brother*." Harry told Draco, who finally let out a weak, choked laugh, both Slytherins shaking their heads.

"Hey Potter! When's your train leaving to take you back home?" Ron yelled as Potter and Malfoy passed by their table the next morning at breakfast, Crabbe and Goyle once again accompanying them as usual.

Hermione couldn't help notice that both Potter and Malfoy had dark circles under their eyes were looking pretty tired than their usual cocky self, causing her to raise an eyebrow in suspicion.

"Sod off, Weasley. Go wank off or something!" Malfoy retorted, causing the Slytherins to snigger in response but Potter nudged him, giving him a pointed look.

"Now, now, Draco, let's not be rude to Weasley here. After all, if it wasn't for him and Longbottom's *stupid* Remembrall, I would never have been chosen for the—" Potter stopped abruptly at Flint's stern glare at him, wincing sheepishly.

Ron looked at him in question, clearly curious about what he had to say. "What? What were you saying, Potter? Too scared to even think of a good comeback?" Ron taunted.

Potter stepped forward towards Ron in anger but Malfoy held him back, giving him a pointed look before he looked calmly at Ron.

"We'll take you on anytime Weasley. In fact, I'll take you on my own. Wizard's duel, wands only and no contact. Tonight. Unless you're chicken of course." Malfoy challenged, glaring at him intently.

Potter grinned behind him and began making annoying chicken noises, causing Malfoy to laugh slightly as Crabbe and Goyle promptly joined in, making Ron shake in anger.

"Of course he's not chicken. I'll be his second. Who's yours?" Seamus asked him, standing up to glare at the Slytherins.

Malfoy didn't even turn around to decide his second, giving the two Gryffindors a smug sneer. "Harry. We'll meet you in the trophy room. That one is always unlocked anyway." He told them calmly, smirking.

"If you're not *chicken* that is." Potter added behind him, causing Crabbe and Goyle to make chicken noises again, laughing before all four Slytherins sauntered off, leaving the Gryffindors glaring after them.

"Are you serious about this, mate? We could get into a lot of trouble if we're caught." Seamus finally said, turning to Ron in nervousness.

Ron opened his mouth to respond but Hermione suddenly joined them, giving both boys an annoyed, pointed glare.

"Excuse me but I couldn't help overhearing what you both were saying to Potter and Malfoy... You *shouldn't* put up with their taunts you know and besides, you could both lose Gryffindor a *lot* of house points if we're caught and I actually *want* to win the house cup this year." Hermione scolded them, giving them a disapproving glance.

"You know, Hermione, it's really none of your business." Seamus answered back calmly, causing Hermione to gasp in insult.

"Yeah, butt out eh?" Ron added, sniggering with Seamus before the two boys turned back to their breakfast, ignoring Hermione for the rest of the meal.

A/N: Phew... Had to get that done sooner or later but don't worry, things will get better once Halloween kicks in here and we all see Harry and of course, Draco grin fight off that troll. And here's a hint, the one they save is definitely *not* AJ. Hehe... Well, hope you guys enjoyed that chapter with the flying lessons and such. I thought of alternating between Gryffindor and Slytherin POV once in a while so we could keep up with our Gryffindors as well. And also, hope you enjoyed Snape's lesson... He sure doesn't hate Harry now, doesn't he? giggle Well, hope you all enjoyed it and also, if you all paid attention, there were some clues during the talk with Hagrid as well. Okay, even *I'll* admit that this chapter was not really all that exciting but hey... It's first year.. grimace Before I forget, of course, **PLEASE REVIEW!!**

